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ON
THE HOLY COMMUNION

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PRIMITIVE CHURCH TEACHING

ON

THE HOLY COMMUNION

BEING AN APPENDIX TO THE AUTHOR'S COMMENTARY
ON "THE OFFICE OF THE HOLY COMMUNION"

BY

EDWARD MEYRICK GOULBURN, D.C.L., D.D.

DEAN OF NORWICH

NEW EDITION

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TO THE REVEREND

EDWARD COOPER WOOLLCOMBE, M.A.,

SENIOR FELLOW, AND LATE TUTOR, OF BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD,

A WARM AND CONSTANT FRIEND,

AND A MOST DUTIFUL SON OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH,

THESE PAGES ARE, BY HIS KIND PERMISSION,

INSCRIBED.

PREFACE

To the Reverend Edward Cooper Woollcombe, M.A.

My dear old Friend,

It was a good fashion of old, now unhappily dying out, for authors, in putting forth their publications, to "show cause" of some kind or other for venturing into print. It was a good fashion; for even if there were no very tangible justification which could be alleged, the attempt to set up one was an acknowledgment of the principle that such an act *needs* justification,—that men have no right to add to the large number of existing books out of mere whim, or personal vanity, or by way of gratifying a *cacoëthes scribendi.* My reasons for putting forth the following pages are soon told, and will, I hope, be accounted by you, and by any others who may care to read them, sufficient. Another edition of a work of mine on "the English Office of the Holy Communion," published some ten years ago, having been called for, it seemed only reasonable carefully to revise it, under any lights which more recent controversy might have thrown upon the subject treated of, before presuming to give it once again to the world. This might have been done with-

out any considerable addition to the original work. But there seemed to be reasons which made such additions almost necessary. Since the original publication of the work, two or three practices, which seem to me wrong in principle, and to have a tendency to undermine the true doctrine of the Holy Eucharist, have shot up with an amazing rapidity, and are gaining every day a greater foothold among the members of our Communion. It would have been easy to ignore these practices altogether, on the plea that a treatise on "the *Office* of the Holy Communion" need not, except indirectly, come across them. But I had to consider that in the small circle of his readers a religious author is in fact a preacher, and that a preacher's first duty is faithfulness. Readers have a right to expect from one who professes to expound "the Office of the Holy Communion" some guidance on such subjects as Fasting Communion, Non-communicating Attendance, and previous private Confession—practices which are now freely discussed everywhere, and which very much divide religious opinion among us. But there seemed to me another reason, over and above that of faithfulness to the reader, for seizing the opportunity of avowing my convictions on these really important subjects. The agitation stirred up in the Church by the Public Worship Regulation Bill, and the movement made in connexion with it for a revision of the Rubrics, are sure to lead to a series of protests, memorials, declarations of opinion, as well as to an abundant shoal of letters in the Church press of the day. I suspect that you are of the same mind with myself in not altogether

liking either of these vehicles of religious opinion. Very rare are the declarations or protests, which exactly fit persons who do not draw them up; and at best, they are dry and meagre, exhibit the truth contended for in its dogmatic (and therefore its most repelling) form, and give no room for explanation or qualification. And as for the Church press, though of course there are occasions in which it may be very properly resorted to and does good service, its utterances are ephemeral and fugitive, and its columns are hardly suited to the methodical discussion of subjects of controversy. And yet it is not the part of a brave man to hide his colours, and wrap up his convictions in his own mind, in times (like these) of difficulty and conflict. We may be unable indeed to sympathize entirely with either of the two great sections of religious opinion which divide our Church; and yet may have no sort of desire to *trim*. Religious opinions may be very determined as well as very definite, without being those of religious partisans. I have accordingly embraced the opportunity, presented by the call for another edition of my work, of saying my say, and making my manifesto, on subjects of present interest. I have not indeed treated of such minute matters as the eastward posture of the celebrant, or the correct vestments to be worn by him in his ministration, as feeling that these are questions of only factitious importance, and that any decision of them made by competent authority may be (and ought to be) gladly accepted and adopted, so *long as the true doctrine of the Eucharist is maintained in its integrity among us.*

For the rest, if asked for a definite expression of opinion upon this new Act, which excites so much apprehension in some and so much exultation in others, though I have no wish to speak otherwise than respectfully of any Act of the Legislature, I cannot say that my expectations from it are great. Granted that it does what its promoters aim at doing, that is, obliterates all the more obnoxious features of what is called (somewhat vaguely) Ritualistic worship, without depriving of their preferments the clergy called Ritualists, or driving them into secession, or even into lay-communion (and this is the best result the most sanguine can hope for from it), how little will it have effected! No law can touch the more important practices which bear upon Eucharistic doctrine; no parliamentary enactment can prevent the attendance of non-communicants (if so minded) at the whole Office; or force men to consider Fasting Communion or previous Auricular Confession as not obligatory on their consciences. Nor does it seem likely that even Mr. Russell Gurney, with the whole House of Commons at his back, could (in the doctrinal Bill which he has pledged himself to introduce) inhibit the clergy from urging, if so minded, these practices upon the people; since (notwithstanding what is advanced against them in these pages) the Book of Common Prayer cannot be said *explicitly* to forbid them.

But is it likely that the new Act will be carried into operation without the loss of some considerable men, whose learning and devotion we shall bewail when we are bereaved of it? It may be so. I will only say

"Faxit Deus!" For myself I have no great faith (neither, I think, have you) in the policy of driving people out. Depletion of course may be—is occasionally—a necessary process; but it is never a strengthening one. We have often speculated together as to whether John Henry Newman might not have been saved to the English Church, if he had met with more sympathy and consideration from our then rulers, instead of being fulminated at in almost every Bishop's charge, and made to feel in the very depths of his sensitive and susceptible soul the hue and cry raised against him by a coarse and somewhat unenlightened Public Opinion. Our Ritualist brethren do not indeed represent either Dr. Newman's extraordinary mental powers, or (possibly) his theological sentiments (may it not be a question whether this so-called modern Ritualism is a development of the movement set on foot by him and Mr. Froude, or an independent outburst of kindred but historically unconnected sentiment?) but it is quite possible that, if the extrusion of *him* were a mistake, *their* extrusion may be not altogether so much a point gained as some would have us believe.

In concluding this lengthy epistle, I must thank you very heartily, my dear friend, for so kindly allowing your name to appear in connexion with these pages. I do not presume to suppose that you will agree with everything advanced even in this letter, much less in the body of the work; but I do know that for many a long year our views have coincided in their main outline; and I have to acknowledge your advice, given from

time to time on difficult questions of the day, and still more your affectionate sympathy and warm appreciation of "Auld lang syne," as one of the best blessings of my life. How much more lively, as age advances, does our appreciation of early friendships become!

Believe me to be, in earnest reciprocation of all your kindness,

Ever affectionately yours,

E. MEYRICK GOULBURN.

PITLOCHRY, *August* 14, 1874.

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THE Author desires to acknowledge his heavy obligations (more or less referred to in the footnotes) in Chapter I. to a Pamphlet entitled "Fasting Communion: how binding in England by the Canons. By the Rev. Hollingworth Tully Kingdon, M.A. Oxford and London: James Parker & Co. 1873"; in Chapter II. to the Reverend W. E. Scudamore's "Notitia Eucharistica," probably the most learned work on the Eucharistic Office hitherto published; and in Chapters IV. and V. to the Reverend Andrew Jukes's "Law of the Offerings," from which his view of the typical significance of the Levitical Offerings is in the main borrowed, as also to the admirable papers of Mr. Le Mesurier and the late Dr. Biber in Part xii. of "Anglo-Catholic Principles Vindicated." (Parker & Co. 1871 to 1874.)

CHAPTER I

ON FASTING COMMUNION

"Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him."
—Rom. xiv. 3

The writer of these pages feels that he cannot respond to the call for a new edition of his "Office of the Holy Communion," without at all events attempting to adapt his work to the state of recent controversy on the subject. While he shrinks from putting forward his opinions, when they are uncalled for, it seems as if he had no right to withhold them, when an opportunity, not of his own procuring, seems to challenge the expression of them. To put forth a new edition of a work (however humble its pretensions) on the English Communion Office, without any explicit notice of the beliefs and practices which are growing up amongst us in connexion with the Eucharist, and finding a ready acceptance with many devout minds, seems to him to be in itself an act of moral cowardice, and a withholding from his readers of that guidance which, as readers, they have some right to expect from him. He feels moreover that all questions of this kind are of deepest interest and importance. In a most instructive and valuable paper[1] on the subject, written shortly before his death, Dr. Biber has shown that

[1] In a Serial called "Anglo-Catholic Principles Vindicated," Part xii., Treatise iii. (1871 to 1874. Oxford and London: James Parker & Co.)

"our spiritual life and communion in Christ, by the power of His resurrection, in the Sacrament of His last Supper, is the true bond of Christian Unity,—the true 'Eirenicon.'" If this be so, what a surpassing interest must attach to the doctrine of the Eucharist, and to those practices in connexion with it, which are not purely ceremonial or ritual, but (like the practices to be commented upon in this and the following Chapter) carry doctrine with them, and are its outward exponents! May it not indeed be said generally, without exaggerating the importance of the subject, that the doctrine of the Eucharist which any man holds, is very much the key of his theological position? The profound Hooker begins his consideration of the Sacraments by a disquisition on the two natures and One Person of the Son of God,—a clear indication this, that, in the mind of that great thinker, these sacred symbols were not (as some with the characteristic shallowness of our time conceive of them) mere appendages and adjuncts of Christianity, but had their roots grappled into its most fundamental doctrines. This being the case, we cannot be too jealous of the purity and integrity of Eucharistic doctrine. And a very evident corollary follows. We cannot be too jealous of the purity and integrity of Eucharistic practice. Devotional habits which seem on the surface plausible and attractive, and which are doubtless adopted with the view of doing reverence to Christ's ordinance, and securing a higher estimation of it, may yet have the seeds of corruption latent within them, and be fraught with danger. So the writer believes it to be with the two practices commented upon in this and the two following Chapters. They are practices known by him to be already widely prevalent, and which it is sought by the warmer advocates of them to erect into universal rules of devotion. But whether he regards the grounds on which they are

rested, or the results to which they may be expected to lead, he cannot but view them with serious alarm. Let it be remembered that the more precious any gift of Christ is, the more certain it is (such is the evil in the heart of man, and such is the jealousy of our choicest treasures which the Devil shows) to be depraved, or at least misused. It is matter of history that this has been the case with the holy Eucharist. This Sacrament, Christ's best and holiest legacy to His Church, at once the epitome of the Gospel, and the means of applying its best blessings to our souls, has been erected by the doctrine of Transubstantiation into an object of idolatrous worship; one of its chief features has been profanely struck out of it by the withholding of the Cup from the laity, and the validity of the ordinance has been thereby (if we cannot say, annulled, yet) seriously imperilled; and the whole ordinance has been, by these deviations from true doctrine and correct practice, unspiritualized, materialized, carnalized, sensualized. Surely we ought to profit by the experience of the Church. The human mind having already in times past gone so far astray on this great subject, we should be very watchful over our minds for the future, lest any teaching should insinuate itself into them out of harmony with that of holy Scripture and the Primitive Church. Such teaching should be resisted in its earliest approaches; for we may be very sure that, however specious and plausible it may be, it cannot fail to be mischievous.

The subject to which we propose to devote the present Chapter, is that of Fasting Communion,—the practice, adopted rigorously and strictly in the Roman Church, and rapidly creeping into our own, of abstaining from all food, solid and liquid, before our reception of the Sacrament. It is not however against the practice itself, but against the erection of it into a law of conscience, obligatory upon

Christians, and indispensable to profitable reception, that we would enter our protest.

As a voluntary act of devotion on the part of individuals, who may find themselves quite capable of it in point of bodily strength, and may really feel that entire previous abstinence tends to make the mind more unclouded and calm than it can be after the reception of food, no right-minded and unprejudiced person can entertain any objection to it. Let such persons by all means be allowed and encouraged to do that which their own experience finds to be most edifying to themselves. Nay, I go further. I would say, Let the feelings and wishes of such persons be consulted in the arrangement of our Services. As very few constitutions indeed can without inconvenience and distress go without some slight refection until mid-day, let there be in our Churches early Communions for the accommodation of such persons as I have described, as well as because others, who set no particular value on the mere bodily abstinence, find their minds fresher and less worn at an early than at a late Communion. God forbid that, in direct violation of what His Apostle has taught us, we should despise or look down on any fellow Christian, who may find edification to himself in the observance of a restriction, which does not approve itself in at all the same way to our minds. Only then, as I will be careful not to "despise" a Christian brother—nay, as I will seek to please him for his good to edification,—so, on the other hand, I will not allow him to "judge" me, nor indeed in a certain sense to "judge" himself. He must not make a law of conscience of his rule, either for me or for any one else. He must not teach for doctrines the commandments of men, and thereby hazard the depraving and nullifying of God's commandments. He must not "add unto the words of the book of this prophecy" at the peril of having

See Rom. xiv. 3, 10.

See Rom. xv. 2.

See St. Matt. xv. 9, and St. Mark vii. 7.

See Rev. xxii. 18, 19,

the plagues that are written in this book added unto him. And this is what, if hearsay may be trusted, corroborated as it is by facts which have come to the actual knowledge of many of us, is at present going on in our Communion. Church people are being taught in some quarters by their ordained pastors that it is a deadly sin to communicate after the reception of food, however slight,—that the elements of the holy Supper must be the first food which passes the lips of a day, or that they cannot lawfully be partaken of at all. The writer is in possession of good evidence that in some quarters this teaching is so thoroughly imbibed that it already operates (as it is sure to operate sooner or later) to a disuse of the Sacrament. Persons who have imbibed this teaching, and at the same time do not find themselves strong enough to observe the rule imposed upon their consciences, prefer absenting themselves altogether from the Communion, and flying in the face of our Lord's plain command, "Do this in remembrance of me," to violating a restriction which has, if I may so say, no authority whatever in its favour, either in holy Scripture, or in Reason, or in the standards of our own Church.

For what authority has this restriction, when regarded not as a voluntary compliance with a custom found by individuals to be edifying, but as a law of conscience?

I. It will be admitted that not a vestige of any warrant for it is to be found in holy Scripture; nay, that what we do find there bearing on the subject looks in a totally different direction. The earliest, and infinitely the most solemn, of all celebrations took place when the communicants could not have been fasting; for our Lord instituted the Eucharist in the late afternoon,[1] and in the course of the Paschal Supper.

[1] "When the even was come," St. Matt. xxvi. 20; "in the evening," St. Mark xiv. 17.

It is true that the custom which obtained in the Apostolic Church of celebrating the Communion as part of a supper, and in connexion with an ordinary meal, was abrogated by St. Paul in the Corinthian Church as having led to irreverent abuses and even to excesses. The Sacrament was disentangled by his inspired authority from the ordinary supper, which had been the swaddling-clothes of its infancy, and made to stand alone. The object of thus disentangling it was that the holy Sacrament might be treated with greater reverence and devotion than heretofore. But in prescribing this greater reverence, the Apostle does not drop a single word from which it could be inferred that previous fasting at home is the way in which it is to be shown. Rather he implies that home is the right place for taking a meal, if we need or wish to take one. Put in common words, his rule is; "I forbid your making the Supper of the Lord a meal. If you really need a meal, you can take it in the house, before you come to Church." "What! have ye not houses to eat and to drink in?" . . . "If any man hunger, let him eat at home."

See 1 Cor. xi. 21, 33, 34.

1 Cor. xi. 22, 34.

II. The Church of England, as a distinct Communion, the Church from which we received our Baptism and grafting into Christ, is absolutely silent on the subject. In neither the Communion Service, nor the Thirty-nine Articles, nor the Canons, is there a single vestige of this restriction, which is pretended to be so essential to a reverent participation, that the non-observance puts a communicant out of a state of grace (for such is the effect of mortal sin). Is not this rather startling? If Fasting Communion be of such vital importance, as some pretend, would not our Prayer Books have told us so? Of the Constitutions and Canons of the Church of England, which might reasonably be pleaded, not as constituting an obligation for the lay members of our

Communion, but as showing the mind of the Church of England on subjects of controversy, there are nine[1] which deal with points of discipline in connexion with the Holy Communion; but in no one of them is there the slightest allusion to any rule of fasting previously to, and as qualifying for, the Sacrament. Among the homilies is one in two parts, entitled "Of the worthy receiving and reverent esteeming of the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ," where, if previous fasting had been deemed necessary either for the worthy reception or reverent estimation of the Sacrament, we might surely expect to find it recommended; but not so much as a hint is dropped upon the subject. So that, if any authority is sought for fasting Communion, imposed as a law of conscience, it must be sought outside the Scriptures and outside the authorized standards of the English Church, nor can it be said (to adopt a phrase from the Service for the Ordering of Priests) to be any part of "the Discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this Church and Realm hath received the same."

I am not ignorant that there are certain Canons and Constitutions of foreign[2] Churches, and even of our[3] own Church before the Reformation, which made fasting Communion obligatory, or imposed penance for "partaking of the Housel after eating." But among the acts of the six General Councils (to which the Statute of 1 Eliz. makes appeal as criteria in judgments of heresy, and the last of which

[1] From XX. to XXVIII., both inclusive.

[2] Mr. Kingdon in his pamphlet "Fasting Communion: how binding in England by the Canons" (Parker & Co. 1873), pp. 20, 21, gives a list of them from Mr. Blunt's "Theological Dictionary." They are all local, as he points out, and "cannot be supposed to bind beyond their own limits." The earliest of them is the Third Council of Carthage, A.D. 397.

[3] Mr. Kingdon refers to them, p. 23, and argues that they have been voided by long disuse.

was held as late as the latter half of the seventh century) no rule on the subject was promulgated. But even supposing for argument's sake that it had been so, it might suffice to remark (even for those who would regard the decrees of a really Œcumenical Council with great veneration) that the 21st Article of our Church, to which all her Ministers have subscribed, asserts that "General Councils (forasmuch as they be an assembly of men, whereof all be not governed with the Spirit and Word of God,) may err, and sometimes have erred, even in things pertaining unto God. Wherefore things ordained by them as necessary to salvation" (and an observance, which cannot be violated without mortal sin, must be necessary to salvation) "have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be declared that they be taken out of holy Scripture."

And if to any it should seem that this Article attaches less weight than might have been expected to the decrees of General Councils, they may be reminded that, in dictating to the Churches of Rome and Corinth the line which they were to take in reference to the great casuistical question of those days, the partaking of meats offered in sacrifice to idols, the inspired Apostle St. Paul does not,[1] in a disciplinary matter of this kind, impose upon them arbitrarily as the law of their conscience the decree on that subject, which had been made in his own presence by the first of all councils, the Council of Jerusalem (as we might have ex-

[1] This is Mr. Kingdon's argument (p. 7). Most interesting and valuable are his remarks on the different mode in which St. Paul dealt with questions of faith and questions of discipline; and his opinion will carry with it all the more weight, because he stoutly maintains the Church's power to make rules, obligatory upon the conscience, for the well-being and guidance of her members. This power he holds to be conferred by the words, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth," &c.; and it forms the point of departure for his whole argument (p. 1).

pected him to do), but argues and settles the question chiefly on the ground of charity, urging upon those to whom he writes that, although there [1] was in truth nothing unclean of itself, and therefore the scruple about eating meats offered in sacrifice to idols was a false and groundless scruple, still it was to be respected in those weak brethren who entertained it, and who had a claim to consideration on the ground of their entertaining it conscientiously. As for Canons of Councils later than the four first centuries, it would be very easy to find several of them forbidding many things which we know to be either Scriptural and right, or else indifferent,—forbidding,[2] for example, the administration of the Cup to the laity, the marriage of priests, or even such trifles as the wearing of beards by the clergy.

I am not ignorant that particular fathers and doctors of the Church have spoken in such a manner as to show that in their times fasting Communion was the rule of the Church, from which it was considered profane to depart; that Chrysostom denies [3] in language almost intemperate an accusa-

[1] See Romans xiv., and 1 Cor. x. 14 to the end. According to the usually received chronology, the Council of Jerusalem was held A.D. 53; the First Epistle to the Corinthians written A.D. 59; the Epistle to the Romans, A.D. 60. When therefore St. Paul wrote these Epistles, six or seven years had elapsed since the decree of the Council was made. Yet in his mode of resolving the question he makes no reference to it.

[2] This was done by the Council of Constance (A.D. 1415); which prescribed at the same time (one might almost say, in the same breath) Fasting Communion. Mr. Kingdon shows, however, (perhaps with a somewhat superfluous elaboration of the subject) that the prescription, after all, was only an *obiter dictum*. His Section on the Council of Constance (pp. 24-31) will abundantly repay perusal.

[3] Chrysost. Opp. Tom. iii. p. 668, D. E. In the passage referred to Chrysostom writes in exile to another exiled bishop, Cyriacus; and it is clear that some of his strong (and almost passionate) language is due to the smart which he felt at his ill-treatment by the Empress Eudoxia and the Alexandrian Patriarch. Mr. Kingdon points out that something of

tion that he had communicated some persons who were not fasting, though the strength of this language is considerably modified, when in the context he invites his accusers to cen-

the edge is taken off from his language by his reference to St. Paul's having administered Baptism to the gaoler's family after they had supped. No one would now-a-days maintain that there is any obligation to fast *before Baptism*. Yet Chrysostom seems to have thought the administering Baptism to people not fasting, was at least as shocking as the communicating people μετὰ τὸ φαγεῖν αὐτοὺς ("after they had eaten"). His repudiation of the latter charge runs thus; "They vamped up many charges against me, and assert that I communicated certain persons after they had eaten. If indeed I did so, may my name be blotted out of the roll of the bishops, and not be written in the roll of the orthodox faith; for, lo, if I did any such thing, Christ will cast me away out of his kingdom." From Chrysostom's "Homily before going into exile" Mr. Kingdon quotes another passage, in which he defends himself in a similar passionate strain against the distinct charge of having administered Baptism when he himself was not fasting. Here again he adduces the case of St. Paul and the gaoler; —not perhaps quite as much to the point as when the same case was adduced to defend communicating persons not fasting; for we can hardly suppose Paul and Silas to have had supper in the prison, though the gaoler and his family probably supped as usual. But of course the rule of Fasting Communion, if it binds communicants, must *a fortiori* be obligatory on the celebrant. Chrysostom's language is thoroughly discussed and disposed of by Mr. Kingdon (p. 68 *et sequent.*).

Probably the strongest Patristic passage in favour of Fasting Communion (stronger much than the passage of Chrysostom, whose language bears traces of irritation) is that in Augustine's letter to Januarius (Ep. liv. Tom. ii. Col. 126, sec. 8, F. G. Parisiis. 1689), and which in fairness should be quoted. "It is very evident that when the disciples first received the Body and Blood of the Lord, they did not receive it fasting. Are we therefore on that account to find fault with the universal Church, because it is always received by persons fasting? For *it pleased the Holy Ghost, for the honour of so great a Sacrament, that the body of the Lord should enter into the mouth of a Christian before other meats; for it is on that account that this custom is observed throughout the whole world.*" The words even of St. Augustine will hardly be thought to carry as much weight as the decree of the First Council of Jerusalem, which ran in the formulary, part of which he adopts; Ἔδοξε τῷ ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι καὶ ἡμῖν ("It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us"). Yet the abstaining from blood, and from things strangled, which were prescribed by this

sure our Lord Himself for giving the Communion to His Apostles after supper; and that our own Jeremy Taylor, in his *Ductor Dubitantium*, speaks[1] of its being a Catholic custom to receive fasting, which custom he that despises "gives nothing but the testimony of an evil mind," though he expressly adds that it is not a duty commanded by God, and admits also that there may in certain cases be a necessity of eating before Communion. We need not "despise" the custom itself, much less the persons who from a sentiment of devotion think fit to observe it, and find the observance edifying. But the opinions of ever so many doctors and fathers cannot make a canon of discipline, or in any sense bind the consciences of the faithful;—we may respect the opinion, and those who hold by it, without feeling bound to surrender our conscience into their hands.

It is somewhat noticeable that, at the very time when some ecclesiastics in our Church are seeking to re-establish

decree, is hardly reckoned a law of conscience among Christians of the present day. See, however, how Mr. Kingdon deals with the passage (pp. x. 19 and 68).

[1] Book iii., Chap. iv., Rule xv. 1. "It is a Catholick custom, that they who receive the Holy Communion, should receive it fasting. This is not a duty commanded by God: but unless it be necessary to eat, he that despises this custom gives nothing but the testimony of an evil mind."

For this reference also I am indebted to Mr. Kingdon; who however omits to observe that in an earlier section of the *Ductor Dubitantium* (Book iii., Chap. iv., Rule xii. 7), the author puts fasting Communion on a level with the character of the Bread used, the mixed Chalice, and the exact form of words (precatory or recitative) used in Consecration, as a matter wherein nothing is ruled either by Scripture or "sufficient tradition." "That the Lord's Supper is sacredly and with reverence to be received is taught us by the Apostles: but whether this reverence ought to be expressed by taking it *virgine salivâ*, fasting, or not fasting, *the Apostles left the Churches to their choice.*" On the first quoted passage, it may be observed that if persons find they cannot communicate fasting without a distracting headache or faintness, it *is* "necessary" for them to receive food previously.

fasting Communion, and insisting upon its observance, others of an opposite school are introducing into their Churches Evening celebrations, not indeed as at all essential or obligatory, but as the only way, in their view, of providing opportunities of communicating for certain classes, whose engagements do not admit of attendance in the forenoon. Perhaps this is one of the numerous instances, in which one extreme of sentiment and practice in the Church begets another,—in which the pendulum of thought, having swung in one direction, not only comes back again to the perpendicular position, but swings equally far in the direction opposite. I must be doubly cautious what I say on this subject of Evening Communions, as having personally and for myself a strong instinct against them, which can hardly, I fear, be justified on grounds of reason. It must be admitted that no exception whatever can be taken against Evening Communion, either from the holy Scriptures, or from the Book of Common Prayer, or from the Constitutions and Canons of the Church of England. Nothing, as I believe, can be alleged against them but a very ancient and prevailing custom of the Church,[1] such as is quoted in favour of fasting Communion, worthy of respect, no doubt, as being very ancient and prevailing, but by no means to be erected into a law of conscience, and capable in its very nature of modification or alteration, to

[1] The Rev. W. E. Scudamore, in his very valuable and learned treatise "Notitia Eucharistica" (Rivingtons, 1872), tells us (p. 34) that nine o'clock A.M. is the Canonical hour for the Celebration. I have somewhere seen an old Canon, though I cannot now lay my hand upon it, which strictly forbids (what now finds so much favour) the Celebration of the Communion before Matins. The fact is that these and other points of discipline vary, and must vary, with the varying exigencies of social life. There must be a plastic power in the Church, by which discipline may be adjusted to the habits and wants of those who are subject to it.

meet new circumstances of the Church and new phases of Society. And if I personally happen to feel (as I do, and many with me) that for myself Communion late in the evening, when the wear and worry of the day has sensibly told upon the freshness of my mind, is unedifying, I will not on any account make my conscience a law for my brother's, but will fully believe that he may and does find edification in a different view of the subject, or at all events that he thinks (surely a good and noble sentiment) that his own private edification is to be postponed to that of his flock. Only then, if I entirely abstain from "judging" him, I shall expect that, in that reciprocity of charity which the Apostle enjoins, he shall abstain from "despising" me, and not call me party-names, or think me narrow and scrupulous, because his novel practice does not approve itself to my feelings.

And now to sum up this argument by some definite practical advice to the reader on the subject which has been considered.

How shall we direct our course in this matter?

The great point to be borne in mind throughout,—the great principle which should pervade and regulate our action,—is no doubt reverence for the Lord's ordinance. St. Paul in his eleventh to the Corinthians enjoins this reverence upon those to whom he writes, and places his ban upon that profane treatment of the holy Supper, which had drawn down God's judgments upon the Corinthian Church in the shape of sickness and death. But then it is very necessary to observe,—what the whole history both of the Jewish and Christian Churches teaches,—that there is such a thing as *false* reverence; and that false reverence, like false modesty, is as antagonistic as possible to the true. The Jews are guilty of false reverence, when, because they are forbidden

to take the name of God *in vain*, they refuse to take it up into their lips at all, and, when the sacred Name of Jehovah occurs in reading the Hebrew Bible, substitute for it some lower equivalent, Adonai or Elohim. If a man should have his Bible bound in cloth of gold, with jewelled bosses at the corner, and should assign it the most honourable position in his library, and should carefully dust it every day and then replace it, but never take it down to open and read it, this would not be true but false reverence. God gives us the Bible to be read,—to be read upon our knees with prayers and tears,—to be worked into our minds by constant reading, and then to be acted out in our lives; and we cannot show greater real reverence to His holy Word than by letting our copy of it be marked with our pencil for easier reference, and worn in its leaves with constant attrition of devout fingers. And in like manner our Lord gives us the holy Supper to be *used*, that we may receive it, and receive it very often, not that we may stand at a distance from it in misdirected awe and trembling, crying out, "What an awful thing it is! and what a precious thing it is! and what a burning bush it is! and what a very Holy of holies it is!" (all which is true, no doubt, yet truth which must not be misapplied) but that we should "take and eat this in remembrance of Him," and, eating and drinking, should have our souls strengthened and refreshed "by the Body and Blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the Bread and Wine." Be quite sure of this, then, that any sentiment or practice which has a tendency to lessen the frequency of Communion, and to deprive the Lord's Table (I do not say of attendants, but) of communicants, whether it be the ignorant superstition of a poor person, out of which the clergyman tries to reason him, or the more refined and cultivated superstition of the educated, which loves to erect

barriers round the ordinance, which the Lord hath not erected, and to say, "Touch not, taste not, handle not," where He hath thrown open to us the tree of life freely,—all this equally looks and leads in a wrong direction. Our whole efforts should be directed to a frequent *use* of the Lord's Supper, with the greatest reverence and devotion, in the interests of our own spiritual life.—But how shall we show the greatest reverence and devotion? It is to be remembered that reverence, though it does not lack its external symptoms, yet has its seat in the heart and mind, and that the qualifications necessary to make the Lord's Supper available are qualifications of the heart and mind,—Repentance, Faith and Love. Above all things, it is necessary that we should pray earnestly, and from the very depths of our heart, in communicating; and prayer is a mental act. Then let our object be to have our mind in such a frame as may facilitate prayer and other mental exercises,—to have it calm, quiet, fresh, and as vigorous as may be. Very many people will feel that this frame of mind is most readily attained in the early morning, when the powers are newly recruited by rest, when the temptations, worries, and disquietudes of the day have not yet opened fire upon them, and before they have looked at their letters, those daily recurring pests of a high civilisation. Such persons will prefer communicating, wherever they can do so, in the morning. Let them do so by all means, and let their convenience and wishes be consulted; only let them not presume to "judge" others who prefer a later and longer celebration, perhaps from thinking that Morning Prayer and Litany beforehand are (as indeed they are) an excellent preparative of the mind.—As for the body, that should surely be treated in whatever way is found by experience to be most conducive to the freshness and vigour of the mind. And this will vary with different

people. It may be quite conceived that there are many, who not only find themselves quite able to support total abstinence before an early celebration, but find their minds to be in this manner more nimble, and less impeded in their free action. With others, on the other hand, and these perhaps the greater number, the mind will be found to be more calm, livelier, and better suited to the work before it after a slight refection, than when all food has been denied to the body. In that case, let there not be one moment's hesitation as to taking food previously. Surely the mind is not to be hindered in its work by laying the body under austere conditions, which God has nowhere imposed. The body should be viewed in the matter as entirely instrumental and ancillary. This is not the place to enter into an historical investigation; but it may be gravely questioned whether the previous fasting, which was made such a point of in the mediæval Church, had not reference to a state of things long since passed away, —the practice of heavy breakfasts,[1] accompanied with large potations of wine and intoxicating liquids. Certainly the present light breakfasts are of comparatively modern date.

These counsels are commended to the reader, that if they approve themselves to him, as in accordance with Scripture, Reason, and the teaching of our own Church, he may adopt and act upon them. While in the spirit of Christian liberty we resent the imposition of any and every yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which God and His Church have not imposed, we believe that the only successful mode of dealing with the question before us, when not advocated as a Christian obligation, but merely as a godly and ancient custom,

[1] See Mr. Kingdon's very pertinent remarks on this point (pp. 38, 39, 43, 44, 98); and particularly his quotation from Disraeli's "Curiosities of Literature" as to the period and the effects of the introduction of tea, coffee, and chocolate as morning beverages (p. 85).

which may still be found profitable in many cases, is the method which St. Paul applies to an earlier case of conscience. Let mutual respect, and consideration, and love, be shown on both sides. Let not those who find the stricter practice to be of advantage to themselves, "judge" those who adopt the laxer. Let not those who adopt the laxer "despise" those who prefer abiding by the stricter. Let each communicate in the manner which he finds most profitable, without for a moment presuming to censure those who prefer a different manner. For "why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

Rom. xiv. 10, 11, 12.

CHAPTER II

ON NON-COMMUNICATING ATTENDANCE

"They gathered every man according to his eating. And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the morning. Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and stank: and Moses was wroth with them."—EXOD. xvi. 18, 19, 20

WE spoke in our last Chapter of Fasting Communion. There is another practice connected with the Eucharist, which has crept into our Church of late, and at present prevails to a great extent, which we cannot but regard with serious alarm, as a departure from the true use of the Sacrament, and as tending to corrupt and undermine the true doctrine of it. This is the practice of non-communicating attendance, that is, remaining in the Church during the entire celebration, as an inferior act of devotion having a quasi-sacramental efficacy, without presenting one's-self as a communicant. I say, *as an inferior act of devotion having a quasi-sacramental efficacy;* because, of course, if practised with other motives and views, non-communicating attendance might be quite harmless, perhaps in some cases desirable. It might very reasonably be thought that for young people about to be confirmed, to witness the celebration of the Lord's Supper once or twice, before they are called upon to take part in it themselves, might be advantageous and impressive, might take off that gloss of novelty, which is so apt to distract people in exercises of devotion, and might

help them to communicate, when the time came for their doing so, more quietly and calmly, and with less excitement. Again there might arise a necessity (or what is next door to a necessity) for the practice we are calling in question. Children old enough to come to Church with their parents, might yet be too young to find their way home alone. Clergy who have already communicated, and would find it unedifying to repeat that action, and impossible to do so with any freshness and liveliness of devotional feeling, might yet be obliged to lend their assistance at a second celebration, lest the service should be unduly and inconveniently prolonged. And I would add that in choral celebrations chorister boys might, in my judgment, be properly enough kept through the whole Office, on the ground of their function being a necessary one, if only the service could be contracted within such limits as not to weary and disgust the minds of children; for unless this condition were secured, it might be wiser and more charitable to the lambs of the fold to dispense with the choral celebration altogether. But all these cases, and others which might be imagined, have a totally different colour from that which non-communicating attendance assumes, when adopted as a piece of devotion, and as a normal practice of the spiritual life. Looked at in this light, it has very strong attractions for devout minds; nor need we doubt, while most solemnly and earnestly protesting against it, that they who practise it do so under the belief that they gain edification from it. The idea that the Lord Himself becomes, after and in virtue of the consecration of the elements, externally present in the Church, quite apart from His reception by the penitent and believing communicant, and quite independently of any action of the human mind whereby His presence is recognised,—this idea lays the mind under a certain spell, which is found to make worship

easier, and to excite a sort of reverence, which seems to faint and flag, as soon as Christ is thought of rather in connexion with the minds of His people than with the place in which they are gathered together. But what if the idea be an effect of the imagination, and will not endure the scrutiny of holy Scripture and reason? and what if the reverence founded upon it be a false and factitious reverence, such as we gave some examples of in our last Chapter?

It ought certainly to make those who practise non-communicating attendance very suspicious of the reverence engendered by it, that it does not lead to the use of what God has offered; or rather, that it does not lead to such use of it, as alone God has prescribed and sanctioned. It was pointed out in the last Chapter that it would be false reverence, if a man were to bind his Bible in a most costly manner, and give it the highest place in his library, and keep it scrupulously free from dust and soil, and yet never read it. And why? because the Bible is given us to be read. Now there can be no manner of doubt that our Lord gave His holy and precious Supper to be received. The words of Institution enjoin reception in the first place, even before they specify the character of the things received; "Take, eat; this is my body. . . . . Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood." If therefore a man makes of this gift of Christ another use, never indicated by the Giver, while declining that use which is indicated, surely there is room for doubt whether the devotional sentiments, which he excites in his mind by this other use, are sound and good. Is a man safe and right, however well-intentioned he may be, if he persists in putting God's gifts to uses for which it does not appear that God intended them? The manna, which was a type of the holy Supper, or I should rather say of Christ in the holy Supper, was given for the nourishment of the people in

their pilgrimage through a barren land which yielded no sustenance for man. And the ordinance of the manna made it imperative to use it for sustenance. "They gathered every man according to his eating. And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the morning." And what was the consequence of violating this precept? The consequence was that what was designed as nourishment, when treated otherwise than as nourishment, became offensive. "Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and stank: and" (for such misuse of God's precious gift) "Moses was wroth with them." I do not wish to indulge in fantastic application of the typical parts of holy Scripture. Yet I think that, without any undue and excessive allegorizing, we may here find a lesson against using God's gifts in a way and for an end for which He has not appointed them to be used. Gifts thus perverted from their right use become a bane instead of a blessing. Be it remembered that Idolatry had its beginning in such a perversion. God gave the sun to shed light and warmth throughout the universe, and the moon to yield her placid silver light by night; and the earliest beginning of departure from God was when men began to detach these and other objects of nature from the practical uses to which God designed them to be put, and to contemplate them independently both of their author and their end. Thus contemplated, they became objects of religious veneration, and did more to injure men morally than to benefit them naturally. And a fate somewhat similar has befallen the means of grace, which are the ordinances of the spiritual world, and especially the holy Communion, which is the highest of them. Separated in men's thoughts and ideas from its use as a means of strengthening and refreshing the soul, the consecrated wafer has been turned into an idol and

worshipped. A priest lifts it in his hands above a prostrate crowd of men and women, who fall down and adore it. This dreadful corruption and depravation of the Lord's ordinance is intimately connected with the treating it devotionally in a way which God has not prescribed—in short, with non-communicating attendance.—Therefore *obsta principiis*. Let not this practice, so closely connected with the corruption of God's ordinance, make further encroachments upon us.

But let us proceed to consider the practice somewhat more methodically.

1. And, first, let us observe what is the characteristic and leading idea of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. This characteristic idea, duly seized, will serve to fence off many errors. We hear much talk of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. And beyond all question He is most really and truly, though in no wise corporeally, present in the holy Supper. It may be very much doubted, however, whether the Real Presence is the chief and most characteristic blessing of the ordinance. The mere Presence of Christ is covenanted to the two or three gathered together in His Name and for His worship, even when there is no administration of this highest ordinance. Union with Christ, which of course involves, but at the same time goes far beyond, the Presence of Christ, is the characteristic feature of the Lord's Supper. The whole symbolism of the ordinance teaches us this. As the bread and wine passes into the living frame of the recipient, and becomes by the natural process of digestion assimilated to that frame, so, wherever there is in the communicant repentance and faith, the Body and Blood of Christ are received spiritually,—the great difference between the natural and spiritual process being this, that in the first the food becomes assimilated to, and closely incorporated with, the frame which receives it, in the other

See St. Matt. xviii. 19, 20.

the spiritual and moral frame becomes assimilated to the nourishment of which it partakes, which nourishment is Christ. Our Lord foresaw the Eucharist, and spoke anticipatively of its effects, when He said; "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." Observe, "Except ye *eat* the flesh and *drink* the blood,"—except the human nature, which He assumed in His Incarnation, and which in His death was sundered into its two component elements, flesh, and blood which is the life thereof, is transfused into your souls by spiritual manducation, and thus made the means of quickening the soul, and imparting to it true vigour, and drawing it up into union with the Lord Himself, "ye have no life in you." How, let me just ask, does non-communicating attendance look, when placed side by side with such a text as this, "Except ye *eat* the flesh and *drink* the blood"?—When we seize the true idea of the ordinance, as conveying not so much the Presence of Christ (although that it does subordinately) as union with Christ, do we not at once perceive that non-communicating attendance is out of harmony with it? For in order to union with Christ in the Supper, there must be reception. Without actual reception, there is no more possibility of union with Christ in the Supper, than there is of an assimilation between our bodies and the elements of bread and wine.

St. John vi. 35.

2. But now to come to the direct teaching of holy Scripture on the subject. I have already noticed the circumstance that, in the words of Institution, the precept to partake of the Sacrament takes precedence of the description of its nature, as if it were only in connexion with the recipient that the Bread and Wine become the Body and Blood of Christ,—as if He had said, "Receive it, and [in the reception] it shall become to you my body and my blood." But

take these striking observations on the same circumstance from an eminent divine of the diocese of Norwich, whose piety and profound study of his subject and of all collateral theology, give him every right to be heard, and oh that he might be listened to!

"The holy Eucharist is a sacrificial rite, commemorative of the Sacrifice of the death of Christ. By it we show and plead before God the atoning merits of His Passion. But this representation of His Sacrifice is in holy Scripture inseparably connected with the *consumption* of the symbols, which represent the Body that was broken and the Blood that was shed upon the Cross. He did not say, Offer this, my Body, and this, my Blood; and then, if ready and desirous, partake of them. On the contrary, the command to take, eat and drink came first; and then He told them that the bread which they were eating was His Body, and the wine which they were drinking was His Blood. By the order of His words, He implies that the commemoration of His Sacrifice by the recipient is altogether dependent on his eating that Bread and drinking of that Cup. . . . . In other words, if we do not communicate, we are not commemorating His Sacrifice; unless we partake we do not offer."[1]

The advocates of non-communicating attendance rest their arguments very mainly on the assertion that the Eucharist is a sacrifice as well as a sacrament. We need not deny,—rather we would stoutly assert with them,—that it is (to use again the words of the author just quoted) "a sacrificial rite, commemorative of the Sacrifice of the death of Christ." But to which of the several species of sacrifice does the Eucharist belong? We, as faithful members of the Church of England, who accept her formularies as for us the true interpretation

[1] Rev. W. E. Scudamore's "Notitia Eucharistica" (Rivingtons, 1872), p. 398.

of holy Scripture, will seek an answer to this question in our own Communion Office. The effective part of the rite having been concluded, and the reception having taken place (mark that circumstance; for it is an important feature of the case), and the Lord's Prayer having been a second time recited, to inaugurate the Post-Communion,—then is said as followeth; "O Lord and heavenly Father, we thy humble servants entirely desire thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept[1] this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving." According to the teaching of our own Church, then, the Eucharist, in whatever *other* sense it may be a sacrifice (and into this point, as it would carry us too far from the subject now before us, we do not propose at present to enter) is most assuredly "a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving." Now under the old Law there were three grand species of sacrifice, which brought out respectively three distinct features of the rite. There was the offering which betokened *Self-dedication*, like the Burnt-Offering; the offering which betokened *Expiation*, like the Sin-Offering; and the offering which betokened Thanksgiving, like the Peace-Offering, of which the Thank-Offering was a variety. According to the express assertion of our Prayer Book, the holy Communion belongs to this last class;—it is, "this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving," a thank-offering or peace-offering. Now one great characteristic feature of all thank-offerings and peace-

[1] These words in King Edward the Sixth's First Prayer Book (A.D. 1549), immediately succeeded the manual acts prescribed in the Prayer of Consecration, and the Prayer from which they are drawn constituted the latter part of the Prayer of Consecration, as our Prayer for the Church Militant constituted its former part. In the Second Prayer Book (A.D. 1552), the Prayer for the acceptance of the Sacrifice was relegated to the Post-Communion,—not, we may be sure, without great significance. The Sacrifice is not offered at all except by communicants. "Unless we partake," says Mr. Scudamore, "we do not offer."

offerings was, that it was to be partaken of by the worshipper on the very day it was offered; "When ye will offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving unto the Lord, offer it at your own will. On the same day it shall be eaten up; ye shall leave none of it until the morrow: I am the Lord." "The law of a peace-offering," says Bishop Andrewes,[1] "is, he that offers it must take his part of it, eat of it, or it doth him no good." And this was most especially the case with the most solemn and dignified of all thank-offerings,—that of the Passover. To "keep" the Passover was[2] to "eat" the Passover; it could not be kept except it was eaten. If any person belonging to a Passover company, failed to eat a piece of the lamb (of at least the size of an olive), he was considered as being excluded altogether from the sacrifice, just as if he had not been at all in the mind of him who offered it. For him the victim was *not* slain; his interest in it was null and void.

Lev. xxii. 29, 30.

We conclude hence that though there be a sacrifice in the Eucharist, even a thank-offering and a Christian Passover, it is a sacrifice so intimately bound up with the Sacrament, that it cannot be offered, nor can we have any the smallest benefit from it, unless the Sacrament be partaken of. The keeping separate the Sacrifice and the Sacrament has no ground whatever in the Word of God.

3. Nor does this separation of what God has joined together find any warrant whatever in the practice of the Primitive Church. Nay, that practice contains implicitly a strong protest against non-communicating attendance. Such attendance was indeed recognised in the Church of the third and fourth centuries,—but, so far from being recog-

[1] Sermon IV. of the Resurrection, vol. ii. p. 251, quoted by Mr. Scudamore, p. 399.

[2] Again I am indebted to Mr. Scudamore for this remark, pp. 399, 400.

nised as a privilege, it was imposed as a penance. The penitents of those days were divided into four orders, who had different places assigned to them in the Church, and different privileges allowed them. The furthest advanced of these orders were called *Consistentes* (or, standers together), from their being allowed to stand with the faithful near the altar, and see the oblation (of the Eucharist) offered, but yet they might neither make their own oblations, nor partake of the Eucharist with the congregation. That even this was considered a heavy censure, may be gathered from a canon of the council of Nice,[1] which prescribes two years of this penance for the crime of idolatry (after ten years in lower stages), and speaks of the persons subjected to it, as communicating with the people in prayers only, without the oblation. The use which we wish to make of this disciplinary canon is to show from it what was the view taken by the early Church of the subject under consideration. If non-communicating attendance had been in those days regarded as a privilege, and held to be a legitimate source of

[1] Canon XI. It runs thus:—"As to those who have transgressed without necessity, or without loss of their substance, or without peril or any thing of that sort,—a thing which hath happened under the tyranny of Licinius,—the Synod hath decreed, albeit they are unworthy of clemency, nevertheless to deal indulgently with them. As many of them therefore as sincerely repent, shall spend three years (assuming them to have been formerly in communion) among the hearers: and for seven years [more] they shall be prostrators: and then for two years they shall communicate with the people in prayers only, without [being admitted to] the oblation."

Mr. Scudamore tells us (p. 394), with a reference to Bona, that "there is an almost universal *consensus* of the better Divines, Ritualists, and Canonists of the Church of Rome in favour of the historical statement that has been now made, viz., that, with the above-named exception of the *Consistentes*, 'no one was permitted to be present at the Sacred Mysteries but those who were able to offer and to partake of the things offered.'"

edification and comfort (which is the view now sought to be inculcated in our Church), it never could have been inflicted as a penance. The penalty to which the *Consistentes* had to submit was, "Show his eyes and grieve his heart;" let him be tantalized with the mere spectacle of a privilege open to others, but which in his present state cannot be his; let him be like the cripple at the Beautiful gate of the Temple placed in sight of a glorious and soul-inspiring worship in which he himself is shut out from joining. It must be admitted that this estimate of the position of a non-communicating attendant is totally different from that which finds in such a position a stimulus to reverence and devotional sentiment, and a help of no mean value to communion with Christ. And what shall we say of the recognised impossibility, implied in the terms of the canon, of participating in the *oblation* without communicating? Does it not run in the very teeth of this new-fangled notion, that we may join in the sacrificial part of the ordinance, while holding entirely aloof from its sacramental part?

See Acts iii. 2.

4. As regards, lastly, the mind of those who drew up our own Office of the Holy Communion and of those who brought it into its present state, it is often pleaded by the advocates of non-communicating attendance that nowhere in that Office do we find any direction for non-communicants to withdraw. This is no doubt a matter of fact; but it is a matter of fact which does not stand by itself; and which, when quoted as if it did, conveys an impression very wide of the truth. Our Communion Office was not all at once brought into its present shape. It passed through several revisions, before it reached the exact form in which it now stands. The First Prayer Book of King Edward the Sixth, put forth in 1549, contained a rubric after the Offertory Sentences, and *before* the direction to set the bread and wine

upon the Altar, to this effect; "Then so many as shall be partakers of the holy Communion, shall tarry still in the quire, or in some convenient place nigh the quire. . . . . All other (that mind not to receive the said holy Communion) shall depart out of the quire, except the ministers and clerks" (whose functions might be necessary as assistants, though they themselves might have communicated at an earlier hour). Such was the first rule of the Reformed Church on the subject, and it certainly does not favour non-communicating attendance. The second Reformed Prayer Book, put forth three years afterwards (in 1552), made a step in advance. An address was then introduced, great part of which we still retain in the Exhortation which is to be used, in case the Minister "shall see the people negligent to come to the holy Communion." In this address, as then put forth, were contained these words; "And whereas ye offend God so sore in refusing this holy Banquet, I admonish, exhort, and beseech you, that unto this unkindness ye will not add any more. Which thing ye shall do, if ye stand by as gazers and lookers on them that do communicate, and be no partakers of the same yourselves. For what thing can this be accounted else, than a further contempt and unkindness unto God? Truly it is a great unthankfulness to say nay when ye be called; but the fault is much greater, when men stand by, and yet will neither eat nor drink this holy Communion with other. I pray you what can this be else, but even to have the mysteries of Christ in derision? . . . . . Wherefore, rather than you should so do, depart you hence, and give place to them that be godly disposed."

This severe discouragement of non-communicating attendance in the Reformed Church had its effect. The practice of hearing Mass without communicating (as a sort of compensatory act for communicating rarely or never) had its

neck broken. In the time of the great Revision of 1662, the practice no longer existed;[1] and accordingly, on the assumption doubtless that it would never be revived, the protest against gazing and looking on, having lost its point, was quietly expunged from the address in which it occurred. Such is the reason why our present Office lacks any definite protest against non-communicating attendance. But in view of these plain facts of history, it can never be said that the Reformed Church approves of the practice, or indeed does otherwise than most seriously disapprove of it.

We have argued the question, as in the last resort it must be argued, on the grounds of Reason, Scripture, the Book of Common Prayer, and the views of the Primitive Church. But if any practice could be put out of court by its manifest tendency, and by the effect which it is likely to have upon the general run of the people who compose our congregations, this would surely be so excluded. It cannot indeed be denied that there is a considerable number of very devout persons, chiefly belonging to one particular school, who *do* communicate very frequently, and thus habitually use the Lord's ordinance for the purpose it was given for, who yet mix with it occasionally the practice of non-communicating attendance, warmly advocate that practice as correct in theory, and wish to see it universally adopted. We do not wish to say a single word which could be construed as disparaging the devotion and simple-hearted piety of these persons, or as manifesting a want of appreciation of the graces of Christian character, which many of them display. But we ask them to consider what must infallibly be the effect of their teaching and example upon people, who do not rise above the ordinary level of Christian character and

[1] See "Notitia Eucharistica" (pp. 395, 396), from which this account is drawn.

the ordinary standard of Christian attainment. We all know how many scruples the hard-worked man of the world either has, or invents, against the duty of communicating; how partly a genuine and commendable feeling of his own unworthiness, partly a fear of being upon too close quarters with God, and being driven to pursue a standard of piety for which his will has not yet mustered up courage, partly an apprehension that familiarity with the ordinance may lead him to hold it cheap, operate to make him a very infrequent attendant at the Table of the Lord. What must (sooner or later) be the effect of instilling into his mind by precept and example, and by the putting in his hand pious little books, which have a strong distillation of Romanism in them, that the Lord may be worshipped acceptably, and the Sacrifice once offered on Calvary pleaded effectually with God, by mere attendance at the holy Table, while only a sorry handful of people present themselves to communicate? The effect must certainly be to diminish the number of communicants, even if the number of attendants should be increased.—And can such an effect be contemplated without dismay, whether we consider the precept, which makes the observance of the Eucharist binding on us; "Drink ye *all* of it," or the nature of the blessing received in it; "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of" (the means of partaking in) "the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" "Except ye *eat* the flesh of the Son of man, and *drink* his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

St. Matt. xxvi. 27.

1 Cor. x. 16.

St. John vi. 53, 54.

CHAPTER III

AURICULAR CONFESSION

"Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day? it is neither new moon, nor sabbath."—2 KINGS iv. 23

THE practice of Auricular Confession may not seem in the nature of things to have any connexion with our subject, which is the Sacrament of the Eucharist. It is quite conceivable that this practice might obtain in a Church, as a supposed means of grace and edification, without any special reference to the highest ordinance of our Religion. But, as a matter of fact, this is not the course which things have taken. The Roman Church not only recognises the necessity of Auricular Confession[1] to the remission of sins, as being of Divine institution, but also binds the practice upon men's consciences by declaring it to be, wherever it may be

[1] Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent, Session XIV., Canons VI. and VII.

"Si quis negaverit, confessionem sacramentalem vel institutam, vel *ad salutem necessariam* esse jure divino; aut dixerit, modum secrete confitendi soli sacerdoti, quem Ecclesia catholica ab initio semper observavit, et observat, alienum esse ab institutione et mandato Christi, et inventum esse humanum: anathema sit.

"Si quis dixerit, in sacramento pœnitentiæ *ad remissionem peccatorum necessarium non esse jure divino*, confiteri omnia et singula peccata mortalia, quorum memoria cum debitâ et diligenti præmeditatione habeatur, etiam occulta, et quæ sunt contra duo ultima decalogi præcepta, et circumstantias, quæ peccati speciem mutant . . . . anathema sit."

had, an essential[1] prerequisite to the Sacrament of the Eucharist, without having gone through which we eat that bread, and drink that cup of the Lord unworthily, and are "guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." And a trace of this connexion lingers still in our own Communion Office, though the confession there recommended is not made obligatory upon the conscience, and is distinctly recognised as not being universally necessary. Still the subject is introduced in connexion with the Eucharist. "Because it is requisite that no man should come to the holy Communion, but with a full trust in God's mercy, and with a quiet conscience; therefore if there be any," who is unable to quiet his own conscience in the manner before described, and requires "further comfort or counsel," he is exhorted to come "to some . . . . discreet and learned Minister of God's Word, and open his grief; that by the ministry of God's holy Word he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting of his conscience, and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness." Private Confession then rightfully challenges a place among those practices which have grown up around,

[1] Session XIII. Cap. 7, and Can. XI.

. . . . "Quare communicare volenti revocandum est in memoriam ejus præceptum: Probet seipsum homo. Ecclesiastica autem consuetudo declarat, eam probationem necessariam esse, ut nullus sibi conscius mortalis peccati, quantumvis sibi contritus videatur, *absque præmissâ sacramentali confessione ad sacram eucharistiam* accedere debeat, quod a Christianis omnibus, etiam ab iis sacerdotibus, quibus ex officio incubuerit celebrare, hæc sancta synodus perpetuo servandum esse decrevit, modo non desit illis copia confessoris: quod si, necessitate urgente, sacerdos absque præviâ confessione celebraverit, quamprimum confiteatur.

. . . . "Et, *ne tantum sacramentum indignè, atque ideo in mortem et condemnationem sumatur*, statuit atque declarat ipsa sancta synodus, *illis quos conscientia peccati mortalis gravat, quantumcunque etiam se contritos existiment, habitâ copiâ confessoris, necessariò præmittendam esse confessionem sacramentalem.*"

and in connexion with, the Eucharist. Of all those practices there is probably none which has graver moral or spiritual bearings. And it is one of present interest; for on all sides of us it is being attempted to make the passage of the Communion Office above quoted the ground for introducing into our own Church a species of Confession, with which she has no sort of sympathy, and which is not borne out by any of her formularies fairly understood and interpreted.

Let us examine, then, into the truth on this much agitated subject. And, in ascertaining it, let us resolve to be guided exclusively by holy Scripture, as it is interpreted for us by the Book of Common Prayer, which represents the sense in which Scripture was understood by those Christians who lived nearest to the times of the Apostles.

The only kind of Confession which is or can be objected to by serious and devout persons, and which thus really comes into controversy at all, is that called in the Roman Church auricular, this word meaning that it is whispered into the ear of the priest. As the first point in any discussion is to be well acquainted with the subject we are talking about, it is well to note that there are three marks or features, which characterise this kind of Confession,—universality, periodicity, and formality. *Universality.* It is held to be binding upon all persons, in whatever condition of life, and indispensable, if not actually to salvation, yet to the health and vigour of the spiritual life,—just as we ourselves hold the two Sacraments of the Gospel to be generally (*i.e.* universally) necessary to Salvation. *Periodicity.* It is to be practised, not once for all, but constantly at stated periods during the spiritual life, and more especially as a necessary preliminary to, and preparation for, the Holy Communion. *Formality.* Which word is not here used in any bad or

derogatory sense, but in the sense in which all the ordinances of our own or any other Church are and must be formal, that is, there is a certain previously arranged method or rule of proceeding in them, necessary (or at least conducive) to that decency and order, with which the Apostle prescribes that all things in the Church shall be done. The person making confession kneels down by the side of the clergyman, who, dressed in his robes of office, sits while he receives it,—and uses a short formulary to the effect that he makes confession to God, and to our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the priest there present, that since his last confession he has done so or so, or left undone so and so. When the Confession has all these features about it, *i.e.* when it is recognised by the parties practising it as universally necessary to salvation (or, at least, to the soul's well-being); when it is offered and received regularly at stated periods; and when it is practised after a certain prescribed rule and method, and with ecclesiastical formalities, it is then Auricular Confession in full blossom. And in cases where it has the two latter features without the first,—where it is not distinctly recognised as necessary to salvation or spiritual health (in which case of course the priest himself would have to practise it, as well as the penitent), but at the same time is carried on periodically and habitually as a normal practice of the spiritual life, and offered and received in set form and with the circumstantials of a religious ordinance,—it is easy to see that in such cases it is tending in the direction of full-blown Auricular Confession, and only wants a little more development to become that. If it is once admitted that there is a very large number of persons who find stated periodic confession to a priest, made in due form, to be extremely helpful to their souls and very conducive to their

growth in grace,—we may be sure that the erection of such a practice into an ordinance more or less indispensable is not very far off.

And this we must not disguise from ourselves is the condition of affairs, at which we in the Church of England have now arrived. Possibly the practice adverted to may not be carried on in the circle to which we belong, and for that reason we may have little cognizance of it at present; but one cannot take up a Church newspaper, or even a secular newspaper, which gives any Church intelligence, without seeing that it is a practice at present extensively and fast establishing itself in the convictions of many young persons who think seriously about religion, and of many of our devoutest clergy. It is no reason for dismissing the subject lightly that most of the persons who offer themselves to confess are young, or again that the majority of them are girls and young women (which no doubt is the case). Young people are to become old, and their moral and religious character will be stereotyped in youth. The girls of this generation are to be the mothers of the next; and who knows not the influence which a mother, if she pleases, can exercise in the formation of the religious character of her children? But even supposing that the class from which the recruits of the English Confessional are drawn, were not in itself an influential class, or a class which could ever be expected to leaven public sentiment, is it not a serious feature of the case that some of our devoutest clergy, men of learning, ability, and the highest possible character, do openly and avowedly inculcate this sort of Confession, if not as absolutely indispensable to the forgiveness of sin (which for the present, at least, they disavow), yet certainly as very conducive to the health and well-being of the soul, and devote a considerable portion of their time to the hearing of

it? That the practice recommended and enforced by them has already gained a good foothold in our Church is clear from the books of devotion which are circulated freely among us, books which undoubtedly contain passages of great beauty, and parts of which are very conducive to edification, while in other parts an attempt seems to be made to venture as near as possible to the margin of Romish error, and sometimes the barrier, which separates us from the Roman Church and its corruptions, seems to be overleapt altogether. That I may not seem to be speaking at random, I extract from a little illustrated manual of devotion entitled "The Path of Holiness, a first Book of Prayers for the Young, compiled by a Priest," the following passage, which immediately precedes the Office of the Holy Communion:—

FORM FOR SACRAMENTAL CONFESSION.

Kneel down, and say:

Father, give me your blessing, for I have sinned.

When the Priest has given you the blessing, say:

In the Name ✠ of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

I confess to God Almighty, before the whole Company of Heaven, and to you, my father, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed, by my fault, by my own most grievous fault. Especially I accuse myself that (since my last Confession, which was . . . . ago, when the penance that was given to me was . . . .) I have sinned.

After your Confession, say:

For these and all other my sins which I cannot now remember, I am heartily sorry, firmly purpose amendment, most humbly ask pardon of God; and of you, my spiritual father, penance, counsel, and absolution.

Listen to the advice and the penance that the Priest gives you.

When the Priest gives you Absolution, bow your head, and pray God to absolve you in Heaven while His Minister absolves you upon earth.

These forms would not be inserted in popular and attractive books of devotion, if they did not find persons to use them. And that they are very widely used is beyond all question. Many of our clergy devote large portions of their time to hearing confession. Not on new moons and sabbaths only, *i.e.* not only at the periods when the public ordinances of the Church are administered, but every day the people flock to the priest, to tender their private confessions, previously to, and as a necessary preliminary of, the receiving the holy Communion. We must not disguise from ourselves that Auricular Confession is becoming an established practice in the English Church.

Now I must remark that the Book of Common Prayer, which is for us the interpretation of the holy Scriptures, and represents the opinions and practices of the purest and most primitive age, not only preserves a strict and significant silence on such Confession as has the characteristics I have described, but even seems to discourage it. The only parts of the Prayer Book, to which appeal is or can be made in the matter, are the Exhortation to the Communion to be delivered on the Sunday or Holy-day immediately preceding the Celebration, and the Order for the Visitation of the Sick. These are the places on which advocates of the practice in question rely as giving support to their views. But surely they break down under them, when candidly examined.

(1.) First, as to the *universality* of the practice, which is the first feature of the full-blown system. The Exhortation in the Communion Office bids persons examine their lives and conversations by the rule of God's commandments, and, having by this examination ascertained their offences, to be-

wail the sinfulness of them, and to confess themselves to Almighty God, with full purpose of amendment of life. And then, after some advices as to the necessity to a profitable Communion, of restitution and satisfaction, where the offence has been against our neighbours, of forgiveness of injuries, and generally of the breaking off of all sins by repentance, follow the words from which the practice of Auricular Confession is inferred to have the sanction of the Church. "And because it is requisite, that no man should come to the holy Communion but with a full trust in God's mercy, and with a quiet conscience; therefore if there be any of you, who by this means cannot quiet his own conscience herein, but requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me, or to some other discreet and learned Minister of God's Word, and open his grief; that by the ministry of God's holy Word he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting of his conscience, and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness." If words have any meaning, surely these words imply that the coming privately to the Parish Priest, or to the discreet and learned Minister, is not the best thing to be done, but the second best. So far then from being urged by the Prayer Book as universal, Private Confession is merely conceded as exceptional. There may be scrupulous or timorous consciences for which such a specific is needed, and to whom therefore it is recommended; but the very point of the passage seems to be that it is *not* recommended to persons in general; *they* will do best, with the assistance of God's grace, to resort to no confessional but His.—Similarly, in the Order for the Visitation of the Sick, the case in which special confession is to be recommended, and a special absolution bestowed upon the patient, is indicated as exceptional by the significant particle "if." The sick person is at a certain point of

the Office to "be moved to make a special Confession of his sins, IF he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter." And his Confession having been made, the Priest is to absolve him, IF he humbly and heartily desire it, in a certain prescribed form. But surely it is not every one whose conscience in dying is troubled with some weighty matter. The Prayer Book would never contemplate this as the normal state of things. Our services are all constructed on the hypothesis that the persons using them are in a right state of mind; that, for example, the Parents and Sponsors who bring children to Baptism are serious and religious persons, interested in the child's spiritual welfare; that parties who offer themselves for marriage are sincerely desirous of God's blessing upon their union; that the corpse brought for burial is that of a person who has departed this life in God's faith and fear. And so in the service for Visitation of the Sick. The patient is assumed, in the judgment of charity, to be in the main a servant of God, one who has lived in His faith and fear. Still, as there may be, and doubtless often are, cases, in which some grave sin, hidden from the eyes of all but God, is rankling in the conscience of a dying man, and since this would effectively preclude that quietness of conscience, with which it is so desirable that the soul should pass into the presence of its Judge, the patient is to be exhorted, if he be conscious of any such thing, to be at one with Truth in respect to it, in order that he may be at one with God,—not to go out of life a hypocrite, cloaking under a respectable exterior some hidden iniquity. And that being done, in case it should be a relief to him to hear once again before his death the sentence of God's absolution of all penitent and believing souls from the mouth of His Minister (for it seems to be assumed that some minds will attach a greater, others a less value, to a formal ministerial

absolution), a special form is provided, stronger and more emphatic than that employed in the daily Office and the Communion Office, in which the Priest is to absolve him. But surely there is here no sort of warrant for the *universal* practice of special Confession, even upon a death-bed, much less in time of health.

(2.) Then as to the periodical recurrence of Auricular Confession, which is a very dangerous feature of the system, perhaps its most dangerous feature, because such a recurrence must in some measure keep the soul in its inmost resorts and confidences hanging upon man instead of God, and make its piety a hot-house plant, weak and sickly, not manly and vigorous,—where is such a practice even hinted at in the Prayer Book? There is not the faintest indication in the Order for the Visitation of the Sick that the special Confession, which the patient is to be moved to make, has been, or ought to have been, the regular practice of his life hitherto. And in the Communion Service we find no sort of intimation that the coming to the discreet and learned Minister is to be resorted to as a normal practice of the spiritual life. It is merely a remedial measure, recommended by way of meeting a temporary emergency. And let me add that this temporary emergency is not stated to be sin (though of course it may involve more or less of that), but the incapacity of a person, assumed to be well-disposed in the main, to quiet his own conscience. Scruples and doubtfulness of conscience are spiritual weaknesses and infirmities rather than sins. And cases are not unfrequent of sensitive and susceptible minds, which are very much harassed by them in early life, but which, when the mental constitution becomes more robust, succeed in throwing them off.

(3.) Lastly, as to *formality*. A form of Absolution is provided in the Order for the Visitation of the Sick, and it is pre-

scribed that "the Priest shall absolve" the sick person "after this sort," which, if we look to the Latin original of that Rubric, "*hoc modo dicens*," probably means in those words,—after that particular form. But it is material to observe that, while a Form is provided for Absolution, none is provided for the special Confession. The penitent is left to make it in his own words, and as his own mind on the spur of the moment suggests. I have never seen this circumstance noticed as indicative of the Church's mind; but to me it seems that there is great significance in it. Absolution is doubtless an ordinance of God. It is unquestionable that our Blessed Lord did lodge in the hands of His Apostles a power (explain it how you like,—the explanation is no part of my present subject) of remitting sins; unquestionable also that St. Paul exerted this power toward the incestuous Corinthian, on the sincere repentance of that offender; and, as the exercise of this power is certainly not less needed in the present circumstances of the Church than it was under the administration of the Apostles, we may safely conclude that this power has descended to the modern Church, floating down the stream of time in the safe ark of the original ministerial Commission; "Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them . . . teaching them . . . and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Our Church of England, in common, I believe, with all orthodox Churches throughout the world, most distinctly recognises the existence of such a power. Whatever its exact nature[1] and limits may be, it is a power communicated at the Ordination of Priests, and

See St. John xx. 23.

See 2 Cor. ii. 10.

St. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

[1] The writer has endeavoured to exhibit its nature and limits in a popular form in Chapters IV. and V. of Part III. of his "Office of the Holy Communion," to which the present Chapters are designed as an Appendix. It is his desire, when time can be found for it, to put forth a translation of Barrow's treatise "De potestate clavium,"—a noble dissertation, exhaustive of its subject.

exercised as often as the Priest says Morning and Evening Prayer, or celebrates the holy Communion. And in order to its various exercises, forms of Absolution are provided, the form betokening Absolution to be an ordinance of God, and to be recognised by the Church as such.—But while Absolution is an ordinance of God, there is not a word in holy Scripture to indicate that private Confession is. It is enjoined certainly by St. James that the sick Christian shall send for the elders of the Church, and that they shall pray over him, anointing him with oil in the Name of the Lord; and it is promised that the prayer of faith shall be to him the instrument both of natural and spiritual healing; "and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him;" from all which we are doubtless at liberty to say that the pastoral visitation of the sick is an Apostolic ordinance, and should be recognised and practised in the modern Church (dropping only that part of it, which had reference to a state of things now no longer existing, when the miraculous gift of healing existed in the Church). And it is true also that the notice of this ordinance is immediately followed by the words; "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." And it is *probable* that the connexion of thought between these words and the preceding is, that the sick person would very naturally, if he felt his conscience burdened with any weighty matter, take the opportunity of disclosing it to those sympathising friends who stood around his bed (particularly to the elders, as representing the Church), and of soliciting their prayers on his behalf. But surely by no means, short of extremely unfair violence done to the passage, can it be made out that here Confession of sins to a priest is recognised as an ordinance of God, or made an institution in the Church of Christ. St.

See Jas. v. 14.

v. 15.

v. 16.

James does not even mention Confession, before he has (if I may so say) done with the ordinance of the Visitation of the Sick; and, when he does mention it, he almost pointedly refuses to recognise anything of an official or formal character in it; "Confess your faults," says he,—not to the presbyters, though it was quite obvious to say so, if he had meant that, but—"one to another."

The same absolute silence as to the form in which a special Confession is to be made, which we observe in the Visitation Service, is observable also in the Communion Service. No form whatever is provided, in which the grief of the soul that is troubled with scruple and doubtfulness is to be opened to the discreet and learned Minister of God's Word, nor is it intimated that any form at all shall be used. The benefit of Absolution is indeed spoken of as that which, *in addition to ghostly counsel and advice*, the troubled and perplexed conscience may hope to carry away; but there is no direction for, nor even any suggestion of, a form in which the Absolution is to be given. If I may venture an opinion, at issue with that of authorities which I greatly respect,[1] I should imagine that the Absolution in question is

[1] My friend, Mr. Scudamore, whose profound learning on this particular subject, as well as his sincere attachment to the *Reformed* Church of England, gives him every right to be listened to, demurs to my position that Absolution (proper) can be ministered except in a set form, and has favoured me with an interesting letter on the subject. He refers to Bingham's opinion in the Sermons on Absolution appended to Book XIX. of his "Antiquities," as supporting his view. But Bingham, it appears to me, does not put out of court an informal private Absolution by means of preaching to the individual. He says that "the declaratory absolution of the word and doctrine . . . *consists in* publishing the terms and conditions upon which the Gospel promises pardon and remission of sins." This is *its constituent*, its essence. Might not this be done informally? He does not however dwell at all upon the informal doing of it, but goes on to say that this species of Absolution is "either general or particular: the general absolution is such as our church appoints every minister to

not *necessarily* to be given in set form at all. Let it be considered that it is called not absolution simply, but "absolu-

pronounce after the general confession of sins in her daily service. . . . But besides this . . . there is a more particular absolution appointed to be given to single persons in some special cases; that is, when men labour under troubles of mind and disquiet of conscience for any particular sins, which they make confession of to a minister, with proper signs of a genuine repentance. In that case the minister is authorized, not only to give them ghostly counsel and advice, but also the benefit of absolution; that is, if, upon a just examination of their case, he judges them to be real penitents before God, then he may not only declare to them the general promises of pardon, but assure them in particular, that, as far as he can judge of their case by the visible tokens and indications of their repentance, he esteems them absolved before God, and accordingly declares and pronounces to them their absolution." But (not at all questioning that this might be done formally) might it not also be done *informally?* To the writer it seems that both the informal and formal announcement of the minister's judgment are intended to be embraced in the words of the Exhortation above quoted. The penitent "requireth . . . (1) comfort or (2) counsel" (two things, I admit, not one) more than his own mind can supply him with. He is exhorted to come to the Minister, "that by the ministry of God's holy Word he may receive the benefit of absolution" (and thereby "comfort" and "quieting of his conscience"), "together with"—the other thing he may stand in need of—"ghostly counsel and advice," and thereby, "the avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness."—But cannot "comfort" and "quieting of the conscience" be had by an informal announcement of pardon, which the heart is opened by God's Spirit to receive? *Are they never had from a public Sermon? And if so, why may they not be had from a private one?* If the composer of the Exhortation intended nothing but a formal Absolution, does it not require to be accounted for that he has indicated no form in which it is to be given? It is not necessary to suppose that he intended to exclude a form, where such might be humbly and heartily desired, and made matter of special request by the penitent. The words of the Prayer Book, like those of Holy Scripture, are most correctly understood, when understood in their broadest sense. I am not ignorant that the recital of a formula in accordance with God's holy Word may be called "the ministry of God's holy Word," as the Baptismal formula is very probably called so in Ephesians v. 26 and in 1 Peter i. 23 (though surely here we should not be right in *excluding* the effect of the preached Word upon the heart and conscience of an adult catechumen). But, in view of the

tion by the ministry of God's holy Word," and that the absolution of the Word and of doctrine was one of the five species of Absolution recognised by the old Fathers as dispensed by the Church.[1] *The first of these* was the great forgiveness of sins dispensed in Baptism to those who receive that Sacrament in penitence and faith, and never, where Baptism may be had, dispensed without it, according to that word of Ananias to St. Paul; "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." *The second* was the absolution of the Eucharist, in which remission of sins and all other benefits of Christ's passion are conveyed to those who communicate with penitence, faith, and love. *The third* was Absolution by imposition of hands (a very ancient form of giving it) and prayer or intercession. Our own Church in the Communion Service recognises this Absolution by means of intercession, a beautiful precatory form of Absolution occurring after the general Confession. *The fourth* was that of the relaxation of Church censures. It had reference to the system of discipline alluded to in the opening address of the Commination Service, by which such persons as stood convicted of notorious sin were put to open penance and punished in this world. When they had duly completed their penance, they were solemnly restored by this kind of Absolution to the peace and full communion of the Church. *The fifth* was the absolution of the Word and doctrine,—a declaration in

composer's having indicated no form, is it fair or reasonable to say that he recognises no informal Absolution, but prescribes exclusively a formal one?

Such is my apology for not subscribing entirely to the view of one, whose researches on such a subject must necessarily give to his opinion a far greater weight than can attach to my own.

[1] See these enumerated and fully explained by Bingham ("Antiquities of the Christian Church," Book xix. chap. i. and ii.).

God's Name of the terms on which He will forgive and accept sinners for Christ's sake,—a declaration which of course may be compressed into a very short formulary, as is done in the Absolution of our daily Service, but which may also be expanded into a short sermon, making reference to the gracious invitations so abundantly issued to repentant sinners in the Gospel. Many and many a time has a sermon on the fulness and freeness of Gospel offers, and the rich abundance of mercy and grace bestowed upon every sinner on the instant of his coming to Christ, quickened and brightened, as with a ray of warm golden sunlight, the overcast, overclouded, desponding conscience. And of course it is open to a minister to urge in his study upon a single soul, with a special reference to that soul's special needs, the same things which he habitually urges from the pulpit. And I respectfully submit that this, equally well with the reading of a stated form over a kneeling penitent, would meet the requirements of the phrase "absolution by the ministry of God's holy Word." The minister is to point the troubled and disquieted conscience to the blood of Christ and the promises of the Gospel, and to say with John the Baptist, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world." And the penitent, catching a glimpse of this Lamb of God by faith, will take heart again, and (like the Ethiopian after his interview with St. Philip) go on his way rejoicing, having received "the benefit of absolution by the ministry of God's holy Word."

And most wise, considerate, and loving is this provision, which our Church has made for consciences either burdened or perplexed, or both,—a provision which we rejoice to have in our Prayer Book, and the withdrawal of which we should feel to be a very serious flaw,—a provision which it is much to be wished that many more persons would avail themselves

of, as we are assured that it would greatly conduce to edification.[1]

But to regard secret Confession to a Priest as a Divine

[1] We extract from Jeremy Taylor's masterly Section on "the imposing Auricular Confession upon Consciences, without authority from God" (Dissuasive from Popery, Part II. pp. 249-295, 4to, London, 1667) the following passage in favour of private Confession, when *not* made obligatory upon consciences:—

"Whether to confess to a Priest be an advisable discipline, and a good instance, instrument, and ministry of repentance, and may serve many good ends in the Church, and to the souls of needing persons, is no part of the question. We find that in the Acts of the Apostles, divers converted persons came to St. Paul, either publicly or privately, and confessed their deeds; and burned their books of exorcism, that is, did what became severe and hearty penitents who needed counsel and comfort, and that their repentance should be conducted by wise guides. And when St. James exhorts all Christians 'to confess their sins to one another,' certainly it is more agreeable to all spiritual ends, that this be done rather to the curates of souls, than to the ordinary brethren. The Church of England is no way engaged against it, but advises it, and practises it. The Calvinist Churches do not practise it much, because they know not well how to divest it from its evil appendages which are put to it by the customs of the world, and to which it is too much exposed by the interests, weaknesses, and partialities of men. But they commending it, show they would use it willingly, if they could order it unto edification. *Interim quin sistant se pastori oves, quoties sacram Cœnam participare volunt, adeo non reclamo, ut maxime velim hoc ubique observari.** And for the Lutheran Churches, that it is their practice, we may see it in Chemnitius, who was one of the greatest fame amongst them, and he is noted to this purpose by Bellarmine; only they all consent, that it is not necessary nor of divine institution; and being but of man's invention, it ought not to pass into a doctrine; and, as the Apostles said in the matter of circumcision, 'a burden ought not to be put upon the necks of the disciples;' and that, *in lege gratiæ, longe difficillimum* too, as Major observes truly, by far greater than any burden in the law of grace, the time of the Gospel. Let it be commended to all, to whom it is needful or profitable; but let it be free, as to the conscience precisely, and bound but by the cords of a man, and as other Ecclesiastical Laws are, which are capable of exceptions, restrictions, cautions, dispensations, rescindings, and abolitions by the same authority, or upon greater reasons."

* Calvin's Institutes, Lib. iii. cap. 4, sect. 12, 13, b. 2.

Institution, obligatory upon men's consciences, or even to make it a chronic devotional exercise, under the impression that it is very healthful to the soul, and a condition of profitable communion, this is a thing so totally different in kind from what the Prayer Book and our best divines do recommend, that it is hard to see how the attempt to confound the two things is otherwise than disingenuous and dishonest.

It is not very difficult to trace the mental process by which Auricular Confession found acceptance with Christians, gradually crept into their practice, and was at length made obligatory in the thirteenth century by the fourth Lateran Council. The same mental process no doubt (for the line of reasoning taken by the human mind is much the same in all ages) is operating to revive in our own Church a practice which our Reformers studiously eschewed, and to which, as has been shown, the Prayer Book lends no sort of sanction. Though the conclusion is most erroneous and most mischievous, some of the sentiments and instincts which lead to it are true, and good, and deserving of all respect and sympathy. First, it is felt that sin in professing Christians is (as indeed it is) a very grave and serious thing, pregnant with the most awful consequences. Time was when this was fully recognised in the Church; and it is the time alluded to in the opening of the Commination Service, when there existed a public penitential discipline, and "such persons as stood convicted of notorious sin were put to open penance, and punished in this world, that their souls might be saved in the day of the Lord." When this system of public penance was, from certain abuses and disorders consequent upon it, broken up, it was felt that something compensating was required—that the strait gate would be made wider, and the narrow way broader, than holy Scripture represents it, unless some very stern and stringent protest was made by

the Church against allowed sin within her own pale. It was thought that she would hold out her privileges and blessings at too cheap a rate, unless something of this sort were done; and it was under this feeling that the Commination Service was drawn up, and inserted in the Reformed Prayer Book, as a sort of substitute, feeble indeed, but such as the times and the state of society admitted of, for the ancient discipline. —Then again, operating in the same direction, there is that true and unquenchable instinct of man's heart, which may almost be called the voice of the Holy Ghost in our fallen nature, that a hypocrite can never be accepted with God till he ceases to be a hypocrite, that one who wears the sheep's clothing of a Christian profession, while conscious of some hidden iniquity which makes him really a wolf, can never be at one with Him who is the Truth, until he finds the moral courage to throw off the fleece, and let himself be seen by men in his true colours.—And then, thirdly, it is felt, and felt most justly, that all real Christians must be living by rule, with self-discipline and self-restraint, and that the easy-going self-indulgent life of the great mass of those who profess and call themselves Christians, who do not make a conscience of using their time profitably, or of governing their tongues and their tempers, is not the life of Christ's faithful soldiers and servants, who fight manfully under His banner against sin, the world, and the devil.

All the above sentiments are perfectly wholesome and just. But then comes the leap from these to the mischievous and erroneous conclusion. As Christians ought to be living by rule and under discipline,—as the ancient discipline of public penance is dropped, and the state of the Church and the times makes it impossible of revival,—can we not invent a wholesome system of discipline of our own, and bring every soul into subjection to it, and make it obligatory upon every

conscience? The command to approach the Lord's Table habitually, and to make there the solemn memorial of His death, together with the power of Absolution vested in the Christian Ministry, furnish us with an excellent platform on which to construct such a system. Let us arise and build. Let us rule that, in order to carry away any blessing from the holy Communion, private Absolution bestowed upon the individual must be first had from a Priest. Let us rule further that, in order to a private Absolution, there must be (what certainly "matches" to perfection) a private Confession. Let us decree that this Confession, in order to be valid (*i.e.* in order to secure Absolution), must be full and perfect—that the penitent must confess every sin, with all its aggravations, so far as he can remember, and must not omit to ransack every hole and corner of his memory; for that omission shall invalidate the Confession, and nullify the Absolution. And where the Priest doubts whether the penitent is explicit enough, or suspects that he is evasive, he shall be directed by questioning—and that even on such subjects as the Apostle says "it is a shame even to speak of"—to drag forth into the light of day the lurking iniquity. And having done this, the Priest shall appoint to the penitent such penance as he shall think fit,—that is, shall bind him to use certain *extra* devotions, very much as a schoolmaster sets a boy an imposition for some fault of conduct. And then the Priest shall absolve him, not in that vague and general style in which Absolution is continually ministered in our Churches, but in the singular number—absolve him before the penance is done (lest he should die meanwhile), but yet always on the condition and understanding that it must be done, if the penitent lives, and that, if it is not done, the absolution does not take effect. Does not all this look wholesome and profitable, on the first blush, and just as if it would bring ordinary Chris-

See Eph. v. 12.

tians, as they so much require to be brought, under rule and discipline, and thus supply a great desideratum in the system of the modern Church? It may perhaps seem so. But for all its seeming it is wrong in principle, and for that reason, when worked out, has been found to be fatally mischievous in results. It is wrong in principle, and has a fundamental flaw in it, because it is solemnly said in God's Law; "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: THOU SHALT NOT ADD THERETO, nor diminish from it;" and this whole system of Auricular Confession and Penance is plainly an addition to God's Word; it is a teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. The utter and absolute silence of God's Word upon any such system as that now described is itself the most eloquent condemnation of it. We need say no more than this in repudiating it;—"I look into my Bible, and I do not find it there." For, powerful as must be the leverage of such a system upon the human conscience, —affecting deeply the condition of the souls submitted to it, as it *must* affect them (for such a practice never can be morally indifferent),—*would it not be found in the Bible, if the leverage were for good, if the system were really salutary?* What! shall Auricular Confession be (as some, even in our own Church, pretend) a practice essential to our spiritual health and well-being, a practice without which we cannot long keep straight or go on right,—and shall we suppose that the wise and tender Father, who loved us so affectionately as to give His Son for us, the Good Shepherd who gave His life and shed His blood for the sheep, and watches over them with a solicitude of which the strongest parental anxiety for a child is very dim and poor figure,—the holy Comforter, who in the sacred Word hath revealed to us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, and surely hath kept back nothing that was profitable to us,—have not made it known

to us for our guidance and our good, have left for the discovery of man a beneficial and salutary practice of devotion, and which was certainly never recognised as obligatory by the Christian Church for the first ten centuries of her existence? It is inconceivable. The very supposition is an impeachment of God's care, of Christ's love, of the Spirit's wisdom.

Young men and young women, beware of this yoke which it is sought to impose upon you, however specious the arguments by which it is recommended, and however devout, able, and learned the advocates may be, who would persuade you to submit to it. It is one thing, when in any special trouble or entanglement of conscience, when wanting sympathy and counsel to aid and animate you in your struggle against warring lusts, to resort to some discreet and learned minister, and to solicit at his hands advice, consolation, prayers for you and with you, and the relief of your conscience by the absolution of the Word and doctrine. Act thus by all means; I do thoroughly believe that by acting thus (and specially by young men acting thus) many a temptation might be avoided, many a sin nipped in the bud, many a sore healed, many a heartache saved. But when private formal Confession to the priest is pressed upon you as a divine ordinance, as a normal practice of the spiritual life, and an essential preliminary to a profitable Communion, then say with the Shunammite's husband; "Wherefore should I go to him to-day," when there is no ordinance to be administered by him, no ecclesiastical function to be discharged, when "it is neither new moon nor sabbath?" Ah! wherefore indeed? Is not the High Priest, who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, tenderer, wiser, more loving than any human priest can be? If by His constantly accruing mercy and grace you are enabled in some good measure to discipline

yourself, and are gaining a growing control over evil tempers and appetites, is not this walking alone better ten thousand times than walking on crutches? "Wherefore wouldst thou go to him to-day" then? Is it because thou wouldst have the benefit and relief of ministerial Absolution? Verily, your Church does not stint you of it; it is to be had every "new moon and sabbath," nay, every day of the year in Churches where the daily Office is said. Do not morbidly crave for any more individual absolution than is there offered. Remember that the Gospel is preached by the Lord's ordinance in general terms—to "all nations"—"to every creature,"—and that it is the part of faith to take to itself those general offers, and to say, "God makes them to me." So with the message of mercy through Christ, on the terms of repentance and faith, which is summarized in the Absolution of the daily Service. So with the Absolution of prayer in the Communion Service. It is dispensed *generally*, and our part is to claim our share in it by faith. Like new minted gold pieces, thrown abroad among the people as a royal largess at a Coronation, of which a man eagerly catches one, and folds it in his robe, and treasures it up as a memorial of the Sovereign's bounty, so the absolutions and blessings of the Church are scattered abroad in God's ordinances promiscuously, and a fervent faith reaches forth its hand with joy, and appropriates what it needs. If then thou art conscious of sin, and wouldst have Absolution, come into the Church. Confess yourself as to that particular in the general Confession to Almighty God, with full purpose of amendment of life. Remember that the true Scapegoat, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world, is in the midst of the two or three gathered together in His Name. Confess thy sins, as it were, over Him, laying the sin upon His devoted head, that He may bear it away. Then listen intently,

devoutly, believingly, to the announcement of pardon, or to the prayer for pardon, which His authorized minister makes over thee in His Name. Take it to thy bosom, hide it in the folds of thy heart—that pardon—it is *thine; as much designed for thee, as if there were none others kneeling at thy side to share it with thee.* And thou shalt arise with a brightened conscience and a relieved heart, as an overcast sky is brightened, and a leaden landscape relieved, by "clear shining after rain."

CHAPTER IV

THE DOCTRINE OF SACRIFICE

"Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the Lord is contemptible."—MAL. i. 7

IT is often asked by those who deny altogether the sacrificial character of the holy Communion, whether the holy Table, at which the Supper of the Lord is celebrated, is ever called an altar in holy Scripture. Many eminent divines of the Reformed Church believe that it is so called in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the writer says; "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle." Richard Baxter[1] will hardly be charged with Popery. Yet he tells us in his "Christian Institutes" that "as the bread" [of the Communion] "is justly called *Christ's body*, as signifying it, so the action described" [meaning the Eucharistic action] "was of old called a

Heb. xiii. 10.

[1] It is well known that Baxter objected to subscription, to the use of the cross in Baptism, and the promiscuous giving of the Lord's Supper; that he was chaplain to Colonel Whalley's regiment in the Parliamentary army; that at the Savoy Conference he drew up a reformed Liturgy, to supersede the existing one; and that on the passing of the Uniformity Act he left the ministry of the Church of England. All the tendencies of his mind were against the theology represented by the Church of Rome; but he was a man of eminent candour, as well as of the highest character, and nothing would ever induce him to strain a passage of holy Scripture on a Procrustean bed of preconceived views. The passage here referred to will be found in his "Christian Institutes," i. p. 304.

sacrifice, as *representing* and *commemorating* it. . . . And the naming of the table *an altar*, as related to this representative sacrifice, is no more improper than the other. 'We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat' (Heb. xiii. 10), seems plainly to mean the *sacramental communion*."

But even waiving this interpretation of the passage in the Hebrews, as being one which all commentators do not accept, and allowing for argument's sake that no passage of holy Scripture can be produced in which the Lord's Table is unequivocally called an altar, there can be no manner of doubt that the converse is the case,—that the Altar of Burnt-Offering of the Jewish ritual is called "the table of the Lord." It is so in the passage which stands at the head of this Chapter. Almighty God in that passage is reproaching the priests of the second temple for their unworthy conduct in presenting on His altar for sacrifice refuse animals: "If ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the Lord of hosts." These blind, lame, and weakly victims are the "polluted bread" of verse 7. "Bread," though a very literal, is not altogether a happy translation. "Food" is the correct word, and the word which is actually employed to render this same Hebrew word in Leviticus iii. 11, where the parts of the peace-offering which are directed to be burned upon the altar,—the fat and the kidneys and the caul,—are called "the food of the offering" (literally, the bread of the offering) "made by fire unto the Lord." So here in Malachi the word should be, "Ye offer polluted *food* upon my altar," the food being animal sacrifices, which had some blemish in them. The idea involved in the passage is one common to heathenism, as well as Judaism, that the God, who is the object of men's worship, himself partakes of the food which

Mal. i. 8.

is offered upon his altar, and consumed by the sacred fire that burns thereon. In accordance with this idea, the word "altar" is exchanged for a phrase, which more clearly indicates Jehovah's participation in what is offered to Him; it is called the "table of the Lord." St. Paul did not originate that expression. He found it in the inspired Scriptures of the Old Testament. The altar of burnt-offering had been called "the table of the Lord" by Malachi, just as by Ezekiel (ch. xli. 22) the altar of incense had been called "the table that is before the Lord." And himself speaking by the Spirit of God, he applied it to the table at which among Christians the holy Supper is celebrated. "Ye cannot," he says, "be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils."

1 Cor. x. 21.

Thus a name, originally belonging to the Jewish altar, is borrowed by the Apostle to designate a Christian board of Communion. This would be surely rather a hazardous mode of proceeding, and one which might lead to erroneous inferences, if in no sense whatever the board of Communion were an altar. If the whole Jewish sacrificial system was intended by the Apostles to be swept away, and a system of worship wholly and utterly new, having no roots in the past, and with the sacrificial element eliminated from it altogether, was to be substituted (as some pretend), one fails to understand this borrowing of phraseology from one system and applying it freely to another. It would surely hazard a mistake. The sameness of phraseology would be taken to indicate a subsisting thread of connexion between the old and the new system, for which there was no ground in truth and fact.

If it be maintained that at all events the term "altar" is nowhere in the Book of Common Prayer applied to the Lord's table, that is no doubt a fact, but like other facts of the Prayer Book, on one of which some observations were

offered in the second Chapter of this Appendix, it is a fact which can be rightly understood only in connexion with the whole history of the Book. The Book was originally drawn up to guide the public devotions of English Churchmen, at a period when the Church was just emerging from the superstitions and corruptions of Romanism. The intention of the Reformers, and it is an intention for which their memory is to be blessed and venerated, was to cut the Church entirely clear from these superstitions and corruptions. In perfect consistency with Scripture and Primitive Antiquity they might have left many things standing, which yet it was judicious and politic,—aye, and essential to the safety of the Church,—to remove. There were many things lawful, which yet were not expedient. More particularly such horrible perversions of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper had grown up around the ordinance in the course of centuries, that it was necessary to proceed with the extremest caution in every item of the arrangements and the phraseology connected with it. The minds of the people had grown to the idea that in the Mass "the Priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt." From this idea they had to be entirely wrenched away. This could not be done effectually without some little violence; a crooked stick can only be made straight by giving it a strong bend in another direction. The Reformers were afraid,—most justly afraid, under their circumstances,—of the word "altar." For the word "Lord's table" they had express New Testament sanction; for the word "altar," as applied to the Communion Table, they had only one (or at most two) New Testament passages, which could be quoted as sanctioning it, and both these were capable of different explanations. It was deemed safe therefore, in the then exigencies of the Church, to waive the term, though it never

Art. xxxi.

can be fairly gathered from hence that there is not a true, and Scriptural, and orthodox sense, in which the Lord's table may be called an altar, and is so called by many of the early Fathers. But the Church is no more in the condition in which the Reformers had to deal with and guide her,—no longer engaged in the hard struggle to extricate herself from an old bondage, or passing through the critical birth-throes of a new life. And accordingly we are now at liberty to vindicate, as Scriptural and primitive, terms and modes of expression, which the Reformers may have thought it safe and wise to drop for a while. The question about images in Churches offers a parallel to that which we are discussing. When the people had to be broken of the habit of worshipping images, and regarding them with religious veneration, it was necessary to decree with great sternness the destruction of those which existed, and to prohibit under very stringent penalties the erection of others. But at a period, when image-worship has (at all events in our Communion) lost its hold upon the minds of men, and statuary in our Churches is regarded merely as one of several forms of Art, which men seek to lay as a tribute at the feet of the Redeemer, for the decoration of His house of prayer, just then to seek to revive a penal statute against images, which had great significance and value at the period of its enactment, this savours of an acrid and narrow Puritanism, rather than of that lofty zeal for righteousness and truth, which doubtless animated the original framers of such enactments.

But, although the Book of Common Prayer does not admit the word "altar," it does expressly and unequivocally apply the word "sacrifice" to the Eucharistic action. The administration and reception of the holy Supper being over, certain concluding devotions are recited, consisting of the Lord's Prayer, one of two Post-Communion Prayers (the

option between which is given), the Hymn *Gloria in Excelsis*, and the Benediction. The first of these Post-Communion Prayers begins thus; "O Lord and heavenly Father, we thy humble servants entirely desire thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this *our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving*." And immediately after these words another mention is made of "sacrifice" as being then and there offered. "And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be *a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto thee*." It will, I think, be useful,—and certainly will fall in with the line of thought, which we have just opened, if in this and the following Chapter we give a very short summary, first, of the true doctrine of Sacrifice, and then of the senses in which there is a sacrifice in the Eucharist, and in which the Eucharist is a sacrifice.

I. What then, in the first place, is the true idea of Sacrifice? I answer,—"Man rendering unto God something which is well-pleasing unto Him,"—no definition narrower than that will exhaust the idea. It is a very common (but very crude) notion, that all sacrifice is of a propitiatory character, and directed to the expiation of sin. Those who have studied the various offerings prescribed by the Levitical law will take a larger view of the subject. They know that, although the law prescribed sin-offerings and trespass-offerings, the characteristic idea of which *was* expiation, yet that it prescribed also other varieties, burnt-offerings, meat-offerings, peace-offerings. In short, as we have already seen in Chapter II. of this Appendix, there were three distinct ideas attaching to the three great classes of offerings, the Burnt-Offering, the Peace-Offering, and the Sin-Offering. The first was that of self-dedication;—man offering to God the acceptable sacrifice of himself, his soul, his body, and all that is his. This was the idea of the Burnt-Offering. The second

was the idea of thanksgiving ;—man offering to God the acceptable sacrifice of a grateful acknowledgment, in return for His mercies. This was the idea of the Peace-Offering. The third was the idea of expiation ;—man offering to God an atonement for sin, an acceptable sacrifice to the justice and holiness of God, as the two former were acceptable to His love in Creation and His love in Providence.

The summary idea of Sacrifice, then, is man offering to God something acceptable to Him, in the way either of self-dedication, or grateful acknowledgment, or finally of expiation.

But now arises the all-important question, "How can man do perfectly, and in an acceptable manner, any one of these three things?" God's demand of them, since He is our Creator, constant Benefactor, Lawgiver, and Moral Governor, is, and must be admitted by every conscience to be, most reasonable. But was ever one found among the sons of men, who did or could comply with the demand? Never among those born under the ruins of the Fall. The Fall brought into our nature a great flaw, which utterly invalidates all that man can do in endeavouring to comply with any one of God's demands. It makes his self-dedication wanting in heartiness, in thoroughness, in fervour; it is not, as it must be, to be acceptable on its own ground, "with all the heart, with all the mind, with all the soul, and with all the strength." It makes his acknowledgments languid and tepid,—who can throw into his thanksgivings to God all the warmth and glow of gratitude which the case deserves? It makes his attempts to atone for past transgressions utterly vain and fruitless, where they are not profane, partly because the man, being still inherently a sinner, is always contracting a fresh debt while he seeks to pay off the old one, partly because there is not value enough in a vitiated

victim to make a worthy expiation, and because to suppose that God can be bought off by gifts and bribes (like an unjust judge) to let sin go unpunished, is, in the very offering we make to Him, to insult Him to His face. In short, the Fall, incapacitating man as it does for perfection, has made every offering, which he lays upon God's altar, if judged in itself and by itself, "polluted bread." God, in virtue of the purity of His nature, cannot accept that which is polluted; and man is polluted through and through, in every department of his complex being—in spirit, soul, and body—by sin.

What needs to be done, then, on man's behalf? We all of us know what *has* been done. God sent His Son into the world, to be born of a pure Virgin, and so to take upon Him a pure and untainted human nature, in which, as the sun is reflected in the pure dewdrop, and all the glories of the prismatic colours displayed, might be manifested all the perfections of the Only Begotten of the Father. He, and He alone, of all that ever lived, rendered to God every sacrifice which can be demanded from man. His self-dedication was absolutely perfect, and therefore absolutely acceptable. Hear Him making the vow of self-dedication, when He says, on coming into the world; "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." He gave Himself up to God—His heart all aflame with love and zeal—and thus offered the Burnt-Offering. He gave Himself up to men, to teach them, to labour for them, to bleed, to agonize on their behalf, and thus offered the[1] Meat-Offering. Amid all His labours for man, and

Heb. x. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and Ps. xl. 6, 7, 8.

[1] The Rev. Andrew Jukes, commenting on the difference between the Burnt-Offering (in which *a life* was offered) and the Meat-Offering, which consisted of vegetable substances (flour, oil, frankincense) says; "Life is that which from the beginning God claimed as His part in creation; as an emblem, therefore, it represents what the creature owes to God. Corn, the fruit of the earth, on the other hand, is man's part in creation; as

His buffetings and contradictions from man, He was continually lifting His eyes to Heaven, and blessing His Father for all His dispensations. "In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee," was one of His purposes, foreannounced before His Incarnation, fulfilled in His life on earth, and even now in course of fulfilment. And thus He offered the Peace-Offering[1] for thanksgiving. Finally, He was implicated, as having made Himself one with us (not indeed in sin, but) in sin's worst and heaviest penal consequences. The second Man, the Lord from Heaven, died under a cloud, to expiate the sins and shortcomings of the first. Not only was the form of physical death, which He underwent, most cruel and most ignominious, but some mysterious anguish, which, partly from that familiarity with sin which so blunts

Heb. ii. 12, and Ps. xx. 22, 25.

such, it stands the emblem of man's claim, or of what we owe to man. What we owe to God or to man is respectively our duty to either. Thus in the Burnt-Offering the surrender of life to God represents the fulfilment of man's duty to God; man yielding to God His portion to satisfy all His claim. In the Meat-Offering the gift of corn and oil represents the fulfilment of man's duty to his neighbour; man in his offering surrendering himself to God, but doing so that he may give to man his portion. Thus the Burnt-Offering is the perfect fulfilment of the laws of the first table; the Meat-Offering the perfect fulfilment of the second," etc. etc. ("The Law of the Offerings, considered as the appointed figure of the various aspects of the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ," Nisbet & Co. 1848, 2d ed. p. 91.)

[1] The Thank-Offering was a variety of the Peace-Offering (see Lev. vii. 11, 22). But the Peace-Offering in its every variety had the thought of grateful acknowledgment in it. It might be "a vow," fulfilled upon certain blessings being conferred, which had been urgently solicited. Here there is the additional idea of the fulfilment of a sacred promise; but still the thought of grateful acknowledgment is not merged. Or it might be a "voluntary offering." The prominent idea here would be that of willingness,—the giving "cheerfully," and "according as" the offerer "is disposed in his heart." But the ground in the heart, from which such "a willing offering" springs, must surely be a feeling of gratitude (see Lev. vii. 12, 16; and 2 Cor. viii. 12; ix. 7).

our sensibilities to it, partly from the circumstance that the relations of sin are beyond the reach of our faculties, pressed down His human soul in the last hour, and seemed to shut out, what was to Him the last ray of comfort and hope, the light of His Father's countenance. And thus He offered the sin and trespass[1] offerings. All this He hath done already.—And now what does He? He has passed upwards into the heavenly temple, not made with hands, and has become, as the Epistle to the Hebrews expresses it, "a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which[2]. Heb. viii.

[1] Most interesting and instructive is Mr. Jukes's Chapter on the Sin-Offering ("Law of the Offerings," pp. 161-202). He points out "the reason why before the Law there were neither Sin nor Trespass Offerings. We read indeed of Burnt-Offerings and Meat-Offerings being offered by many of the early patriarchs; but they are never recorded to have offered Sin-Offerings, for 'where there is no law there is no transgression.' 'By the law,' says the Apostle, 'is the knowledge of sin,' and again, '*sin is not imputed* where there is no law.' It was the Law which convicted man of sin, and made it necessary that he should have a Sin-Offering." Again he points out the significance of the Sin-Offering being *not* "of a sweet savour," as the Burnt-Offering was. "The sweet savour Offerings were *for acceptance;* the others *for expiation*. . . . In the one case the Offering was accepted to show that the offerer was accepted of the Lord; and the total consumption of the Offering on the altar showed God's acceptance of, and satisfaction in, the offerer. In the other case the Offering was cast out, and burnt, not on God's table, the altar, but in the wilderness without the camp; to show that the offerer in his offering endures the judgment of God, and is cast out of His presence as accursed. . . . The one is,—'He gave himself for us, as an offering to God of a sweet smelling savour.' The other,—'He gave himself for our sins;' 'He was made sin for us who knew no sin.'" And as to the distinction (merely specific, not generic) between the Sin and the Trespass Offering; "The one is for sin in our nature, the other for the fruits of it. . . . In the Sin-Offering *no particular act* of sin is mentioned, but *a certain person* is seen standing confessedly as a sinner; in the Trespass-Offering *certain acts* are enumerated, and *the person* never appears." But the whole Chapter is replete with interesting and edifying suggestions; and indeed the whole work should be studied carefully by those who wish to seize the *rationale* of the Levitical Offerings.

the Lord pitched, and not man." If He be "a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle," He must have a ministration to fulfil, priestly functions to discharge. What are they? It is absolutely necessary to right apprehensions of the subject that we should seize this point.

What does He, as regards His Sin-Offering? It was completed and over, when He cried upon the Cross; "It is finished." Even He cannot make the offering over again, cannot repeat it; for it is written that He "offered one sacrifice for sins for ever." But though it cannot be made a second time, it can be pleaded. And this is what He does with it now; having made it, He pleads it. In gracious accents He appeals to it on behalf of transgressors, and implores, asks, claims as of right, that the great appeal may be heard for every penitent and believing soul. And this intercession is ever going on. Like the sweet bells on the high priest's garment, which he was bidden, on pain of his life, to cause to tinkle when he went into the holy place it is never, never silent. "He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

St. John xix. 30.

Heb. x. 12, and see ix. 28.

See Exod. xxviii. 35.

Heb. vii. 25.

What does He next, as regards His Burnt-Offering and His Meat-Offering? These too are not to be repeated, do not admit of being made a second time. Christ's self-devotion, both to the cause of God upon earth, and to the interests of men, was complete as soon as He expired. His life was a grand monument of human obedience and submission, which received its last finishing stroke as He cried, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." But this offering, like the former, though made once for all, may be, and is, pleaded by Him *now*. He asks that it may be remembered on behalf of, and imputed to, His people—that God, regarding them through the medium of Christ, may see Christ's righteousness in them, as one who looks at an

St. Luke xxiii. 46.

object through coloured glass sees it of the colour of the glass through which the light passes to his eye.

And now, thirdly, what does He at present, as regards His Thank-Offering? I doubt not that, before it is stated, the thoughtful reader will perceive a difference here. Neither the Sin-Offering nor the Burnt-Offering can be made more than once; but the Thank-Offering admits, by its very nature, of being offered continually—of being protracted through the ages of eternity. The language in which this Peace-Offering, or Thank-Offering, was vowed beforehand, is that already quoted, "In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee;" and again, "My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him. The meek shall eat" (eat what? eat the "sacrifice of his peace-offerings for thanksgiving," as such sacrifices were prescribed in the law to be eaten, "the same day that it is offered,") "and be satisfied: they shall praise the Lord that seek him: your heart shall live for ever." The words come from the great Psalm of the Crucifixion, the 22nd, and they represent the vows which Christ made upon the cross as to the sacrifice of praise which He would offer in the midst of His brethren, "in the midst of the church" or congregation, if He were saved (as He was) from the lion's mouth, and heard from among the horns of the unicorns. But it must be manifest to every one that the fulfilment of this vow was not confined to the forty days, during which He lingered upon earth after the Resurrection; nay, that it did not then receive its most emphatic and complete fulfilment. No! when the Holy Ghost descended on the day of Pentecost, and constituted the Christian Church, communicating to them Christ's own Presence (for it will be remembered that He had said; "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you"), and establishing in His own

Heb. ii. 12. Ps. xxii. 25, 26.

See Lev. vii. 15.

See Heb. v. 7.

St. John xiv. 18.

Person a living thread of connexion between the Head of the body in heaven and His members upon earth, then were things in a condition for the great "sacrifice of peace-offerings for thanksgiving," — a sacrifice to be made in the sanctuary of Heaven by the great Minister of the Sanctuary, the echoes of it being caught up in every Communion Feast ("this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving") which is celebrated in the Church upon earth. But let us not forestall, as to the senses in which the Eucharist is a sacrifice, and in which (not the same, but a distinct assertion) there is a sacrifice in the Eucharist. These require for their full development another Chapter. Suffice it that in the present Chapter one glimpse of the truth on that subject has been opened to the reader.

For the present let us settle it in our minds that there is and can be no true priest, *in the highest sense of that word*, but Christ; and that there is and can be no other offering but His, (whether of self-dedication, or of expiation, or of thanksgiving,) which is in the least degree acceptable to God independently and on its own ground. None,—whether in Gospel times, or in the times of the Law. We will not run away with the very common, but very shallow and mistaken notion, that the blood of bulls and goats really did something effective towards the putting away of sin, and that the descendants of Aaron offered sacrifices more real and more availing than the Christian Church offers at the present day. This, besides being itself a great mistake, will introduce into the whole subject such confusion of thought, that we shall be quite unable to see our way through it. A Levitical sacrifice was a divine institution, as being prescribed in God's Law; and doubtless, to those who took part in it merely on the ground of its being a divine institution, much more to those whose eyes were opened by the Holy Spirit to catch a

See Heb. x. 4.

glimpse of its true significance, (and probably they were more than we think for), it must have been in its measure a means of grace; but in itself it was absolutely without efficacy and worthless; it borrowed all its virtue and value from the Sacrifice of Christ, to which it made, by the manner of its construction, a prospective reference. It was one of the instruments, which it pleased God to make use of, for applying to His people under the Old Covenant the merits of the Sacrifice of Christ. The sacrifices made by the Christian Church under the New Law, though offered under clearer light, and instruments of a much larger grace, are in themselves equally impotent. Make what you will of them, they can never rise higher than divinely-instituted means, whereby the virtue and merit of what Christ did and suffered for us is communicated to the faithful soul. Sacrifices were this in a lower and feebler degree; Sacraments are this in a higher and fuller degree. The most fundamental difference between the two, (putting aside the difference of their outward form, which after all is NOT fundamental,) is merely this, that the Levitical sacrifice is prospective, the Christian Sacrament retrospective. The one spoke to Hope; the other speaks to Memory. The slain victim stimulated and nourished devout anticipations; the broken bread and outpoured wine stimulate and nourish devout recollections. Are not hope and memory great powers? does not man live by them in the future and in the past? Well, it pleased God, in constructing ordinances for His Church at various stages of her existence, to lay His consecrating hand upon these powers, and quicken them into active operation. The sacrifices of the Law were to make the one only Sacrifice live in the hopes and desires of the faithful in bygone generations. The Sacraments of the Gospel are to make the same Sacrifice live in the memories of the faithful in the present

generation. Both are no doubt much more than this. They are respectively anticipations and commemorations made in the presence, and under the immediate sanction, of the Most High. They have a God-ward and higher aspect of worship, no less than a man-ward and inferior aspect of edification. They do not preach merely; they are instruments of impetration, adoration, praise, communion. But the only basis of both is what we have described, the one Offering of Christ in its several aspects. And it is a basis which establishes a real connexion and identity of principle between worship under the Law and worship under the Gospel, between the altar of the old Levitical ritual and the table of the Lord under the new and better Covenant.

CHAPTER V

THE EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE, THE CHRISTIAN PEACE-OFFERING FOR THANKSGIVING

"Also in the day of your gladness, and in your solemn days, and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets . . . . . over the sacrifices of your peace-offerings; that they may be to you for a memorial before your God."—NUMBERS X. 10

IT is worthy of observation that the Greek word used in St. Luke's Gospel, when that evangelist rehearses the institution of the Eucharist, and by St. Paul also, when he rehearses the revelation from the Lord with which he had been favoured on the subject, is the same, which in the Greek version of the Old Testament Scriptures, called the Septuagint, is used to denote the "memorial" made "before God," by blowing the silver trumpets over the sacrifices of peace-offerings. This circumstance suggests a better translation of the words used by our Lord in instituting the Eucharist. "Do this for the memorial (or commemoration) of me" would be a better rendering than, "Do this in remembrance," that is, for a remembrance, "of me." There is a not unimportant difference of meaning between, "Do this for a remembrance," and "Do this for the commemoration." While every commemoration is a remembrance, every remembrance is not a commemoration. A commemoration is a solemn and formal act of remembrance, designed not only to keep alive in the individual mind, but to hand down, and preserve to future generations,

St. Luke xxii. 19. 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25. Num. x. 10.

the memory of an individual or a transaction. It is not a commemoration, but simply a remembrance, when a son, looking upon some token of affection given or bequeathed to him by his father, bethinks him of that father's loving solicitude for him in the period of his childhood. But when it is felt that the founders and benefactors of some great institution ought, as long as it continues, to be enshrined in the memories of those who have an interest in it, and a day and hour is set apart for this purpose, and at the appointed time in the hall of the institution the names of these founders and benefactors are read out, and their services to the institution publicly recited, and then an oration made in their praise,—this is a commemoration,—a solemn formal act, involving no doubt a remembrance, but going much beyond it.[1] The holy Supper of the Lord, while, as one of its effects, it awakens a remembrance of Him in the mind of each of His faithful people, has a wider scope than this;—it is a solemn formal commemoration of His dying love, which hands down the memory of it to the latest generations of the Church,—nay, and more than this, it is a commemoration which appeals effectually to Him, who has said, "Put me in remembrance," no less than to man; it is a memorial before God, no less than in the face of the Church, of the once offered, never to be repeated, Sacrifice of Christ.

Isa. xliii. 26.

In our last Chapter the doctrine of Sacrifice, as it is exhibited in the Levitical Law, was briefly explained; and it was shown how Christ, while He was upon earth, offered

[1] It may be added that, "Do this for THE commemoration of me," or "for my commemoration" (εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν), goes beyond "Do this in remembrance of me." The latter is simply equivalent to "Do this *as a remembrance*,"—as one out of several (conceivable) methods of calling me to mind. The other indicates that the method designated is *the appointed* method. "Do this for the" (established) "memorial," "for *my* memorial" (which I instituted, and commanded to be observed).

for us the burnt-offering and meat-offering of a devoted life, and then the sin and trespass offering of an expiatory death, —and how He is now (not indeed making these offerings again, but) pleading them before God in our behalf. This is what our High Priest now does in Heaven, the sanctuary above, which, as the Holy of Holies was separated from the Holy Place by a veil, is screened off from us, and indeed from all mere creatures of God, being inaccessible doubtless to the highest archangel. He is exalted "far above all principality and power." "Angels and authorities and powers" are "made subject unto him." It was also stated that there is one offering which, by the very nature of it, could not be completed while He was upon earth, but admitted, as the burnt-offering and sin-offering did not, of repetition,—and that this was the thank-offering; the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. "In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee," says He in Psalm xxii. 22 (comp. Hebrews ii. 12), and again (Psalm xxii. 25); "My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him." This is the offering which is at present being offered. Over and above the pleading, in the way of intercession, of the past and finished Burnt-Offering and Sin-Offering, the Intercessor, in His character of risen and glorified Son of Man, is at present giving thanks in the midst of the Church, praising God in the great congregation, paying His vows before them that fear God. Christ, it is to be remembered, is not only High Priest of the sanctuary of Heaven, but also, as He is called by the Apostle to the Hebrews, "a minister of holy things and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man,"—this tabernacle being the Church Universal, which is divided into two great sections, the Church militant here on earth, and the Church triumphant in Paradise. It is as

See Eph. i. 20, 21.

See 1 Pet. iii. 22.

Minister of the Church,[1] and not as High Priest of the screened sanctuary, that He offers His Peace-Offering for thanksgiving and for the payment of His vows.

But now, having sufficiently studied the principles which underlie the question, let us address ourselves to the solution of it. "In what senses is there a sacrifice in the Eucharist, and in what sense is the Eucharist itself a sacrifice?"

The answer will be best elicited by treating the subject according to those divisions of it, which have been already traced out, and by inquiring—1*st*, What is done in the Eucharist as regards Christ's Sin-Offering; 2*dly*, What is done as regards His Burnt-Offering; and 3*dly*, What is done as regards His Peace-Offering for thanksgiving and the fulfilment of His vows.

I. What is done in the Eucharist as regards Christ's Sin-Offering? That is done in regard to it, which Christ Himself does in heaven,—it is pleaded before God, and pleaded efficaciously. And observe the method of this Eucharistic pleading. We may plead the Sin-Offering in simple prayer; we do so, as often as we say at the close of our prayers, "through Jesus Christ our Lord." Put into a large paraphrase, this is equivalent to saying, "O God, we are not worthy in ourselves to draw nigh unto thee; much less to solicit any blessing at thy hand; for we are miserable sinners, who have broken thy law; but we look to thee for pardon, acceptance and grace, through him, who not only fulfilled the righteousness of the law for us, but also endured its curse upon the tree." Now this same pleading of Christ's Sin-Offering which we make in prayer, we make in the holy Supper, according to His own appointment, by

[1] See this thought nobly developed in a Sermon by the late Rev. Canon Melvill ("Melvill's Sermons," Vol. I. Sermon II. Rivingtons, 1870).

a representative and commemorative action, constructed purposely in such a manner as to show forth His death before God and man. The bread formed of wheat, bruised in the mill in order to be converted into human sustenance (compare the texts, "Bread corn is bruised;" "He was bruised for our iniquities"), is solemnly broken under the eyes of God and man, to represent the fracture of the body of Christ for our sins by the impact of the nails, lance, and thorny crown. The wine, formed of grapes which are trodden in the winepress (compare, "I have trodden the winepress alone;" "he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God"), is solemnly poured out to represent that shedding of Christ's blood, without which there could have been no remission. This action, when performed in faith, pleads with God for forgiveness and acceptance, just as, in a lower degree, prayer offered in the faith of Christ's Name pleads with Him. Before dealing with the symbols of bread and wine in the prescribed manner, we rehearse before God, and so put Him in remembrance of the fact that Christ, the gift of His tender mercy to man, "made" upon the cross, "by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world." Thus we plead in the Eucharist the Sin-Offering of Christ, offered once for all. And we plead it effectually, *1st*, because the way in which we plead is the way of His own appointment; *2dly*, because His heavenly Intercession, when He observes us keeping His appointment, lends virtue and gives weight to our pleading. But if it be asked whether in this sense the Eucharist be a sacrifice, it must be answered in strictness of speech, "No. It is not a Sin-Offering itself; but only the commemoration of a Sin-Offering, effective through faith and the virtue of Christ's Intercession."

Isa. xxviii. 28. Isa. liii. 5.

Isa. lxiii. 3. Rev. xix. 15.

See Heb. ix. 22.

If it should be asked how God can forget or need to be reminded of anything, seeing His mind is infinite, and consequently there can be with Him no mental perspective,—the remote past and the remote future must be as present to Him as the present,—the only answer is that holy Scripture, which is His written Word, thus speaks of Him; and that it is a far safer, wiser, and more reverent course to shape our views on the phraseology of His Word, than in the conceit of our natural minds to speculate upon a subject which must be high above out of our reach. What progress towards understanding the thoughts, plans, and reasonings of the human mind could be made, think you, by the most sagacious and intelligent of animals? And must there not be a much wider interval between the highest created mind and the infinite mind of God, than between the intelligence of one creature and another? Suffice it to say that, albeit we cannot conceive in God any sort of mental imperfection, yet that there must be something in Him,—we cannot say what it is,—analogous to memory in our minds, and which, viewed through the medium of human nature, is memory. For when He would have His people plead with Him for those blessings, which He is always more ready to give, than they to ask, He says: "Put me in remembrance: let us plead together."—And we read that He appointed the rainbow as an outward visible sign, that He might thereby remind Himself of His covenant with the earth; "And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth." And in the passage which stands at the head of this Chapter, as well as in other passages of the Levitical Law, God is expressly said to be memorialized, and precepts are given for the purpose of making the memorial come up before

Isa. xliii. 26.

Gen. ix. 16.

Him. Thus the silver trumpets are to be blown over the burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, "that they may be to you for a memorial before your God;" and in time of foreign invasion an alarm is directed to be blown with them, the effect of which should be this, "And if ye go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresseth you, then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets; and ye shall be remembered before the Lord your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies." Similar language is maintained in the New Testament. The prayers and alms of Cornelius, we are told, represented him in the sanctuary of Heaven; "thy prayers and thine alms are come up *for a memorial* before God;" "thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God." And indeed the great prayer-precepts of our Lord and His Apostles are all founded on the idea that God must be made acquainted with our wants, before He will supply them. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." "By prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." In exact conformity with all this, the great precept for the highest act of Christian worship runs: "This do in remembrance"—for the commemoration—"of me,"—a commemoration, not primarily or principally before man, but rather before God, that He may be moved by this pleading of Christ's Atonement to forgive, accept, and bless you.

Num. x. 10.

Num. x. 9.

Acts x. 4.

Acts x. 31.

St. Matt. vii. 7.

Phil. iv. 6.

St. Luke xxii. 19.

II. But, secondly, what is done in the Eucharist as regards Christ's Burnt-Offering and Meat-Offering,—the self-devotion to the glory of God and the interests of man, which characterised His life upon earth? This offering, like the preceding, cannot be repeated; it can only be pleaded. And it *is* pleaded, when in the Prayer of Consecration we make mention of Christ's "one oblation of himself

once offered," as being "a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world." For had not His self-dedication been thorough, hearty, entire—had not the devotion of His life come up to the extreme of God's requirements,—His oblation of Himself could not have been "full, perfect, and sufficient," the victim offered for the sins of men would not have been without blemish and without spot, and so could not have endured the strict scrutiny of God's judgment.

But though the perfect devotion of Christ's life, whereby He offered both the Burnt-Offering and Meat-Offering, cannot possibly be made a second time, and nothing remains either for Him or for us but only to plead the merits of it, yet in respect of this devotion, it is open to us to do, what we cannot do in respect of the Sin-Offering,—that is, to imitate it in our humble measure—to devote our lives, as far as the honest intention and purpose of them is concerned, to the same great ends of God's glory and man's welfare. And this devotion will be most acceptable to God, *not independently or on its own ground* (for it must always be flawed by the corruption of our nature), but on the ground of Christ's meritorious oblation of Himself, if it be made from loving gratitude for the mercies of redemption, that gratitude, which only the Holy Spirit, the living thread of connexion between Christ's Spirit and ours, can enable us to yield. Most beautifully is the imperfection of this offering in itself, and the supply of its imperfections in Christ, set forth in one of Dr. Daniel Brevint's Eucharistic[1] Prayers; "O my God, accept of a heart that sheds now before thee its tears, as a poor victim doth its blood, and that raises up

[1] The prayer is given at length in the late Bishop Wilberforce's "Eucharistica," one of the most valuable manuals of Eucharistic preparation which our Church possesses.

unto thee all its desires, its thoughts, its zeal, as a burnt-offering doth its flames. And since my sacrifice can neither be holy nor accepted being alone, accept of it, O Father, as it is an oblation supported by that sacrifice which alone is able to please thee. Receive it, clothed with the righteousness of thy Son, and made acceptable with that holy perfume which rises from off his altar; and grant that he who sanctifies and they who are by him sanctified, may be joined in one passion, and may enjoy hereafter with thee the same glory. Amen." This is the sacrifice to which St. Paul exhorts us in the beginning of his twelfth chapter to the Romans; "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God," (those mercies which must be embraced by faith in the first instance, before God will accept from us any sacrifice,) "that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." And the words, in which our own Communion Service instructs us to present this offering, are drawn from the above passage of the Epistle to the Romans, with only a slight enlargement of its phraseology,—"And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto thee." Here then, there *is* a sacrifice in the Eucharist, though it is not a sacrifice of Christ, nor of the Body and Blood of Christ. And yet it *is* a sacrifice; for both St. Paul and the Book of Common Prayer call it so; even a sacrifice of burnt-offering under the New Law of the Gospel. Under the Old Law burnt-offerings consisted of cattle without blemish, wholly consumed upon the altar. The New Law has substituted for these the living bodies of Christians, yielded in all their members, by an act of self-dedication, to the glory of God and the service of men. Such an offering can only be yielded by a heart inflamed, as Christ's

Rom. xii. 1.

was perfectly, and as ours through the working of His Spirit may be imperfectly, with the love of God and man.

But there is another sacrifice *in* the Eucharist, distinct from that *of* the Eucharist, which this is the place to notice. If a man sincerely gives himself to God, he gives with himself his property; what he has follows what he is. Our Lord detected the fact that the rich young man had not given himself up to God, in the self-surrender of perfect love, by applying to him the test of a demand, which God was then and there making upon him; but with which he was backward to comply. "One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." We see from the example of Cornelius that alms no less than prayers may come up to very good purpose before God; "thine alms are come up for a memorial before God." And alms are distinctly recognised in the New Testament as a sacrifice under the Gospel. St. Paul called the things sent to him through Epaphroditus from the Philippians, "an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God." And in the Epistle to the Hebrews the sacrificial character of alms (assuming them of course to be offered in the faith and love of Christ's Name) is expressly recognised; "To do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

St. Mark x. 21.

Acts x. 4.

Phil. iv. 18.

Heb. xiii. 16.

And it will be remembered that in the earlier part of the English Communion Office there is a distinct recognition of this particular sacrifice. "The Alms for the Poor, and other devotions of the people," are at a certain point of the Service to be received "in a decent bason to be provided for that purpose;" and then humbly presented by the Priest and placed upon the holy Table; after which, so much Bread and Wine having been also placed there as the Priest shall

think sufficient, he is directed to use these words; "We humbly beseech thee most mercifully to accept our alms and oblations, and to receive these our prayers, which we offer unto thy Divine Majesty."

Here, then, there is a second sacrifice made *in* the Eucharist, distinct from the sacrifice *of* the Eucharist, the sacrifice of our substance, which necessarily accompanies the sacrifice of ourselves. We may call it, if we will, the sacrifice of the meat-offering under the New Law. For the meat-offering foreshadowed Christ's devotion to the interests of men, as the burnt-offering foreshadowed His devotion to the cause of God. And alms are for the relief of our fellow-creatures.

III. But, thirdly, what is done in the Eucharist as regards Christ's Peace-Offering for thanksgiving and for the fulfilment of His vows? Here at length we come to the Eucharistic Sacrifice proper, as distinct from the sacrifice of our souls and bodies, of our prayers and alms, which are made in the course of the Eucharistic Service. It has been already said that our great High Priest in heaven, He who, in the strict and highest sense of the word, is our *only* priest, deals with His Thank-Offering in a different manner from that in which He treats His Sin-Offering and His Burnt-Offering. His life cannot be—needs not to be—lived over again. His death cannot be—needs not to be—died again. Neither Sin-Offering, nor Burnt-Offering does He, nor can He, repeat; He only pleads them efficaciously before the throne of grace. But His Thank-Offering, in the nature of things, is capable of being repeated. And He does repeat it continually. Nor does He repeat it singly and alone. What Christ does in Heaven, His Church does upon earth; nay rather, it is not as if He were in one place far remote, and His people in another; He does it not only for them, but with

them and among them, standing in their midst. For though "the natural body of our Saviour Christ is in heaven, and not here," yet, in virtue of His promise, He is in the midst of the two or three who are gathered together in His Name, and is with His true disciples "always, even unto the end of the world." He "walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks," which are His churches; His ascension having exempted Him, if I may so speak, from the condition of a local presence, to which He was subjected upon earth, and having given Him that ubiquity as Son of Man, which He always had as Son of God; and His Spirit being that living thread of connexion between Himself and His people, which draws Him down, with His retinue of angels, into the midst of their assemblies. In these assemblies He is Precentor as well as Priest, leading and conducting, though unseen by the bodily eye, their sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. This He vowed before His Incarnation that He would do; "In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." And this He does at every Communion Feast, as well as at the assemblies of His people for lower and less blessed exercises of devotion, in pursuance of that vow.

See St. Matt. xviii. 20.

See St. Matt. xxviii. 20.

Rev. ii. 1.

See Eph. iv. 10.

Heb. ii. 12 and Ps. xxii. 22.

But what is there, then, distinctive in the Communion Feast, which differences it from, and gives it a higher rank than, other assemblies of the Church,—makes it, not only *a*, but *the*—the distinctively Christian sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, the sacrifice which bears on it Christ's own stamp and signature? It is that provision is made in it for bringing the worshipper into direct and close communion with the object of His worship. In order to join worthily in the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving (or, at least, as worthily as it is given to flesh and blood to do), the worshipper must be united to Christ the sacrificing Priest. This is effected in the old way, the way which was re-

cognised in the Church under the Law, and which is still recognised in the Church under the Gospel. The eating of a sacrifice was held to bring the eater into communion with the being to whom the sacrifice was offered. As the Apostle intimates, when speaking of the Lord's Supper, recognising its correspondence under the Gospel with the Levitical sacrifices of the Old Dispensation, and unfolding to us the communion with Christ, which is enjoyed by a faithful participation of it. "Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? . . . . . the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils." 1 Cor. x. 18, 20, 21.

In accordance, then, with this view of the effect of eating a sacrifice, it was decreed that men should still have communion with God by the eating and drinking of the consecrated symbols of His Son's Passion and Sacrifice. There was still to be in the Church a material offering, the "Peace-Offering for thanksgiving" of the New Law, which should be consumed by the worshipper, and which being received in penitence and faith, should bring him into immediate communion with the one great Priest, the one great Leader of the Church's worship. Great modifications of the outward form of the offering were to be made, corresponding to the change of the Dispensation. Bloody sacrifices were abolished; and an oblation of bread and wine, the strengthening, restoring, exhilarating food of man, and in some respects more instructive in its symbolism than animal sacrifices could be, was substituted in their stead. And the consumption of part of the sacrifice by the fire of the altar, connected as it was with the idea that the god

himself, to whom the sacrifice was offered, *literally* partook of it,—this was abolished. The Peace-Offering of the New Law, unlike that of the Levitical ritual, was to be wholly consumed by the worshipper.

The above observations will, I think, have made it appear that the whole Eucharistic act, including the oblation of the elements, their subsequent consecration, and (last, but not least) the reception of them, is in itself a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, the "Peace-Offering for thanksgiving" of the Old Law, preserved in its essentials under the new, but brought out in a new form, and with great modifications, corresponding to the change of the œconomy.

If now in conclusion we are asked categorically, whether the Bread and Wine of the Eucharist, considered in themselves, be a sacrifice, there is no reason to blink the answer. The *un*consecrated Bread and Wine are, and were recognised by the earliest Fathers and Liturgies as being, an oblation, or offering of the fruits of the earth, made out of our substance, to God, in acknowledgment that we are nourished and preserved by His bounty. But they are not an offering of the Body and Blood of Christ, nor indeed (since, at the time of offering them, they have not yet received consecration) have they yet become even the authorized symbols of His Body and Blood. It is a most instructive circumstance that in all the earliest Liturgies which have been preserved to us, the oblation or offering of the elements is made (just as in our own Liturgy) [1] BEFORE

[1] I am indebted for this observation, as also for the passage of the Clementine Liturgy ("admitted to be the best representative we have of an Ante-Nicene Liturgy") quoted further on, to the Rev. John Le Mesurier's most valuable treatise on "the Scriptural and Primitive Doctrine of the 'Eucharistic Sacrifice,'" written for "Anglo-Catholic Principles Vindicated," Part XII. (1871 to 1874, Oxford and London, Parker & Co.), a

AND INDEPENDENTLY OF THE CONSECRATION. And immediately *after* the oblation, and the prayer that God would accept it, follow words to this effect; "Send down thy Holy Spirit, the witness of the sufferings of the Lord Jesus, on this sacrifice, that he may exhibit (ἀποφήνῃ) this bread, the Body of thy Christ, and this cup, the Blood of thy Christ; that all who shall partake of it may be confirmed in godliness, may receive remission of their sins . . . . . and may obtain everlasting life." This petition clearly shows two things; first, that in those early days the Bread and Cup *were* regarded as a sacrifice; secondly, that they were *not* regarded as a sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ. For *after the sacrifice has been offered*, the Holy Ghost is invoked over it, to make it to the faithful receiver, what therefore it was not before. It is much to be regretted that the compilers of the American Liturgy have departed from this primitive order, by placing the oblation of the elements AFTER the consecration of them, thereby hazarding a great and fatal mistake, which is *that what is offered to God is the very Body and Blood of Christ.* As matters stand, the English Communion Office is probably the most faithful representative in existence of the earliest Liturgies. As for the *consecrated* elements, they are the authorized symbols of Christ's Body and Blood, with which the memorial of His sacrifice is made before God; as it is written, "This do in commemoration of me." And they are also the vehicles and means of conveying that Body and Blood to the penitent and faithful soul, as it is written; "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of

St. Luke xxii. 19.

1 Cor. x. 16.

serial which contains many words in due season, and is likely to do good service. Dr. Biber's papers in the same Part are also of great interest and importance.

Christ? the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"

And now to sum up the scope of this Appendix, in bringing it to a close. The author has endeavoured to warn the reader against what he cannot but regard as being very serious practical errors, which have recently grown up among us in connexion with the precious and blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist, and also to exhibit a full and clear outline of the doctrine of that Sacrament, as taught in holy Scripture, and echoed by the writings of the earliest Fathers and by our own Communion Office. He will only add the prayer that, in this very critical and difficult subject of controversy, God may open our eyes to see the right path between the frightful distortions and corruptions of Romanism on the one hand, the effect of which is to degrade (we were about to say, to exalt, but it *is* degradation, not exaltation) the Supper of the Lord into an object of idolatrous worship, and the half-truth taught by Zwingle on the other, which recognises the Supper as a means of stirring in the human mind the affecting remembrance of the death of Christ, but finds nothing more or higher in it. Do not say of this latter doctrine, by way of apology, "It is at all events true, so far as it goes." So it is, we readily admit. But half-truths, accepted without their legitimate complement, are sometimes the most mischievous of errors. "Work out your own salvation," expresses one side of truth. But what shall become of our salvation, if we set ourselves to this working out without due consideration of the other side; "For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure"?

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